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SYSTEM

OF

CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE.

BY

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PREFACE.

FEW readers will be disposed to ask from the author an apology for the brevity of the treatise. It is in order, however, to explain that there has been no remorseless sacrifice of dogmatic material for the sake of limiting the bulk of the work. We have not been restrained from freeing our mind on all the principal themes of Christian dogmatics. The brevity attained is largely due to the sparing use of history, except as subservient to the proof of dogmatic propositions. It was our conviction that there is scanty propriety in attempting to import into a constructive treatise a great part of the history of doctrine. While admitting that the fruits of doctrinal history need to be brought under contribution by the framer of a theological system, we were persuaded that this can be done without a bulky reproduction of doctrinal details.

As to the compass of the work, or the circle of admitted topics, very little time has been spent in an attempt to determine what a theological encyclopædia of an ideal order might prescribe. We have included such themes as seemed appropriate to the sphere for which the book was more directly fashioned.

No discreet reader will expect to find in the volume a satisfactory solution of all theological problems. We claim only to have made a patient and industrious effort to explore the great themes whose significance must forever stimulate to thought, while their depths reach beyond the capacity of any measuring lines that have yet been placed in the hands of men.

So far as conscious purpose is concerned, we have not written for the satisfaction of any party, whether conservative or radical. The oft-repeated but thoroughly flippant assumption of the ultra-conservative, that any departure from the traditional basis is likely to endanger the whole fabric of the faith, has not deterred us from giving hospitality to relatively new views where a sane consideration of the data seemed to require their admission. On the other hand, the disparaging estimate which the intemperate radical is wont to award to the thought and belief of past generations has not hindered us from appropriating, with affection and veneration, every portion of a long-treasured faith to which good reasoning and judicial historic sense seemed to us to leave a place. It is our conviction that any value which may belong to the treatise can legitimately be ascribed in large part to the writer's endeavor to keep above the plane of a provincial and partisan outlook.

Boston University,
August, 1903.

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Part I.

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LEADING PRESUPPOSITIONS OF THE CHRISTIAN SYSTEM.

CHAPTER I.

THE PRINCIPLES OR CONDITIONS OF RATIONAL CERTAINTY.

I. — The Necessity of a Unitary Psychical Agent as a Condition of Knowledge.

Complete agnosticism involves mental suicide or immoral dogmatism. If there are no trustworthy grounds for any conclusion, then the conclusion that nothing can be known is as groundless as every other, and the person who utters it indulges in self-contradictory babbling or in conscious falsehood. In the absence of knowledge, thought is without valid materials, and speech can have only the brute function of expressing blind impulse.

It may be claimed, perhaps, that there is room for opinion where knowledge proper is denied. But the ultimate ground of preferring any opinion to its opposite must be its better agreement with known truths or facts. Accordingly, in the lack of a substratum of knowledge, opinions are left without any real justification.

Passing from these truisms we are confronted by the seri-

ous problem of the conditions of knowledge, or the grounds and methods of rational certainty.

Real knowledge presupposes a real subject, a psychical agent, unitary and persisting, capable of reacting against impressions and interpreting them. Without the psychical agent it is conceivable that there might be a succession of nerve vibrations, but it is not conceivable that they should bear any meaning or result in knowledge. A nerve vibration could not know itself even as a vibration, to say nothing about connecting itself with an exterior cause, without being hypostasized by some unthinkable magic into a real subject.

Knowledge, even if it can exist at all, cannot make the least advance without acts of distinction, comparison, memory, and judgment. Now it requires a unitary psychical agent to compare, to distinguish, to remember, and to form judgments. One of the terms or members which enter into the process must be held while another is brought into relation with it; or, if the attention passes back and forth between the terms, each must be recognized as that which was previously known. Rule out the psychical agent with its consciousness of identity in the midst of change, leave only a passive organism receiving impressions from the outer world (or from some unknown source), and you have ruled out all rational conception of the most elementary facts of the mental life. Analysis, comparison, memory and judgment have become enigmas.

II. — The Failure of the Sensational Psychology Occasioned by its Denial of a Unitary Psychical Agent.

Radical sensationalism, as denying a proper unitary subject of the mental life, can provide for nothing better than a procession of unrelated sensations. It has no way of connecting the sensations or of turning them into materials for thought.

It can assume like sensations or unlike sensations, but it affords no basis for a judgment of likeness or unlikeness. It can predicate a change in sensations, and, making consciousness only another name for a present sensation or group of sensations, can speak of a change of consciousness; but it affords no rational ground for supposing a consciousness of change. No more does it afford a ground for consciousness of persistence, for that involves memory, and is thus dependent upon an act of combination. By excluding a unitary self-conscious subject, which, being present to each member of a series, can truly relate any one with the others, thoroughgoing sensationalism runs into unavoidable bankruptcy in its psychological theory.

A near approach to a confession of this outcome has been made by so distinguished a representative of the sensational philosophy as John Stuart Mill. "If we speak of the mind," he says, "as a series of feelings, we are obliged to complete the statement by calling it a series of feelings which is aware of itself as past and future; and we are reduced to the alternative of believing that the mind, or ego, is something different from any series of feelings, or possibilities of them, or of accepting the paradox, that something which *ex hypothesi* is but a series of feelings can be aware of itself as a series."[1] This confession is good, and the author might well have joined with it a practical token of repentance in an attempt to reconstruct his philosophical system on a sound basis.

Herbert Spencer, who in one connection and another has given expression to the most unmitigated sensationalism, if he has not confessed in so many words the disagreement of his system with fundamental facts, has at least illustrated its shortcomings by irrelevant, arbitrary, or contradictory representations. His elaborate picturing of happenings, real or imaginary, within the nervous system, gives no insight into mental

[1] Examination of Sir William Hamilton's Philosophy, p. 213.

reality, and, so far as founding a rational psychology is concerned, reaches only to the commonplace fact that the mind is more or less conditioned in its operations by the body. In order to provide for mental functions he is obliged to assume and to smuggle in that which he professes to deduce. In accounting for the genesis of thought, as Thomas Hill Green remarks, "he thinks of the multiplication of impressions as already involving a recognition of their relations, even when he is treating of it as the efficient cause which is gradually to result in such a recognition. The one consciousness, equally present to, yet distinguishing itself from successive feelings, without which there could be no such synthesis of them as is necessary to a recognition of their difference in kind and degree, and to their constituting a consciousness of change, is first taken for granted and then represented as resulting from the synthesis which presupposes it."[1] Spencer's resort to evolution does not help the case in the least; for the difficulty to be dealt with is the inconceivability of mental experience at all, as either beginning or continuing, apart from a unitary psychical agent or conscious ego. It is also a comment on the alleged adequacy of his sensational theory, that Spencer, in order to escape sheer idealism, is constrained to bring back the ego which he had expelled. His fundamental view makes the mental order, the purely determined, a resultant of the physical order, and reduces our irrepressible conviction of freedom to a standing illusion. But "in his argument with the idealist the ego acquires a new character. It is no longer a series of faint impressions, or the inner side of nerve-motions, but a true source of energy, and the warrant for affirming a thing-series, apart from the thought-series, is found in the fact that our energy is resisted by an energy not our own. This is excellent doctrine, but it does not agree with the other doctrine, that the ego is only a sum of mental states, and that

[1] Works, I, 438.

mental states affect no physical states." [1] Once more, Spencer denies that anything can be subject and object at once, and so rules out the possibility of immediate self-consciousness. Yet, on the other hand, he makes all our psychical states, as well as our physical states, manifestations of the absolute, that is, of the mysterious power back of all phenomena; he defines consciousness as the aggregate of these psychical states, the aggregate of thoughts and feelings present to an individual at any time; and he maintains that there is in us not merely a negative but a positive, though indefinite, consciousness of the absolute. Now as being manifested in every psychical state the absolute is the subject of all consciousness; consequently, it is the subject of the particular consciousness of which it is the object, that is, subject and object at once. The consciousness in question may be indefinite, but it is enough that it is a consciousness at all. The representation logically concedes the possibility of an immediate self-consciousness. Spencer, therefore, if a glance be taken through his system, is seen to offer a very fair equivalent for Mill's notable confession. In proportion as the great ingenuity and industry expended by him have failed to sustain the sensational theory, he has the more fully illustrated its intrinsic faultiness.

Sensationalism, whether formally materialistic or not, involves necessitarianism. Self-determination is ruled out by the very definition of the ego which makes it only a series of feelings or sum of psychical states, unless, perchance, feelings and states can be thought of as producing or transforming themselves. Now the doctrine of necessity, to say nothing about its moral bearings, assails the trustworthiness of knowledge. Spencer, to be sure, is of the contrary mind. He says: "Psychical changes either conform to law or they do not. If they do not conform to law, this work, in common with all works on the subject, is sheer nonsense: no science of psychology is pos-

[1] Bowne, Metaphysics, first edition, pp. 386, 387; revised edition, pp. 319, 320.

sible. If they do conform to law, there cannot be any such thing as free will."[1] The philosopher at this point might have reminded himself that there is in fact a vast deal of nonsense in the world, — for example, the very general conviction respecting the reality of free will; that all this, on his premises, is necessitated by law; and that, accordingly, the predication of law is no security against the presence of a great amount of nonsense, whether inside or outside of the work entitled "Principles of Psychology." A better insight would have revealed to him, that, where all is necessitated, one event is just as conformable to the nature of things as another, and that, accordingly, only in a system which includes freedom is there any tenable ground of distinction between truth and error. Mill, after a fashion, confessed that there is no intrinsic distinction between them by suggesting that, possibly, in some other world, two and two may make five.

III. — The Categories, or the Primary Forms of Intuition and of Thought, as Conditions of Cognition.

The affirmation that knowledge presupposes a unitary psychical agent is one way of saying that the possibility of knowledge is dependent upon the existence of a mind dowered from the start with a distinct constitution, a constitution inclusive of powers of acting as well as of capacities for being acted upon. Whatever may be afforded from without, cognition takes place only as the mind reacts upon this material, in harmony with its constitutional outfit.

It is the honor of Kant that he duly emphasized the scope and office of this subjective factor in cognition. Perceiving that sensations, save as they meet an organizing and interpreting faculty, could afford only a confused manifold, and

[1] Principles of Psychology, I, 503.

that experience, as being always of the individual, could never contribute the element of necessity and universality which appears in many of our judgments, he concluded that rational experience is dependent upon certain *a priori* forms of intuition and of thought, such as space, time, cause, substance, unity, plurality, likeness and unlikeness. These are not indeed, as he acknowledged, antecedent to such experience in point of time; but logically they are its condition. Unless already at hand, implicitly contained in the mental constitution, rational experience could not begin. Cognition accordingly is a work of construction. Though the materials may be furnished from without, the aspect which they take on in the view of the knowing subject is due not merely to what they are in themselves, but also to the mental forms by means of which they are apprehended or so related as to give rise to knowledge. In other words, the mind knows things as they appear to it, and the appearance is the resultant of two factors: (1) the nature of the things; (2) the mental forms by means of which things become matter of cognition.

Whether the list of *a priori* forms, as given by Kant, is fully correct or not, we are not called upon to determine. The point to be emphasized is that there are such forms, a positive constitution of mind conditioning cognition, operating as a constant factor in determining the appearance of objective reality.

IV. — Question whether the Dependence of Knowledge upon Subjective Factors is Prejudicial to its Certainty.

Thus far the theory of Kant in no wise assails the trustworthiness of knowledge. The affirmation that the mind is an active instrument in cognition, and that its forms help to determine the appearance of objective reality, amounts simply to

the statement that the mind cannot abandon itself or alienate itself from its own standpoint. Nothing is disturbed thereby. Community of knowledge is provided for in the common mental constitution of men, which under the like conditions provides for like cognitions of objective reality. This reality is not made the less real or fixed because men are compelled to know it after the manner of men, or as beings endowed with a specific constitution. Neither can its significance be regarded as in any wise disparaged by the same fact. If things were made for minds, then what they appear to be, that is, what they are in conjunction with minds, is of vastly more consequence than what they are in themselves, or apart from that conjunction. The supposition that to an order of beings possessing a different constitution the universe would appear different does not open the door to any appalling scepticism. Very likely it would appear different in some respects to a different cognitive agent. But then, it is to be noticed that it remains in question how far a representative of an unknown order of beings might differ from us in intellectual constitution and yet be truly cognitive. This much is certain: inasmuch as reason cannot be asked to commit suicide, it would be gratuitous folly to admit that any fixed datum of our rational nature can be contradicted by the experience of any finite intelligence whatever. To that extent our confidence in our capacity for knowledge ought to stand firm against all hypothetical ghosts.

V. — Question as to the Objective Validity of the Categories.

The fact that such categories as cause, substance, number, and quantity are subjective, or inherent in the constitution of mind, involves by itself no denial of their objective validity. It was at this point that Kant stumbled. He did not, it is

true, hold with steady consistency to his conclusion that the categories are only regulative of mental operations, and cannot be predicated of external reality. In various connections one or another category is really assigned an objective validity. Still, his general teaching implies that the forms of thought cannot be applied to the outer world. But why may not this be done? Take for example the category of causality — what stands in the way of assuming its objective validity? In fact, this must be assumed if any consistent ground is to be left for affirming the existence of an external world; for only that which does something, or is a cause, has any conceivable means of advertising its existence; and only that which acts in like manner under like conditions, or according to a regular scheme of causation, has any conceivable means of making known (to the outside observer) its identity. Abridge to a purely subjective range the category of causation, and the individual man is left alone, bereft not only of his theoretical warrant for assuming an external world, but also of that for inferring the existence of any fellow-man. Others of the categories — that of number for example — enforce themselves as equal necessities of thought in relation to the objective sphere, and no pretext for questioning their validity can be discovered.[1]

Since the categories belong to the primal data of mind, and reason cannot invite to the choice of a position which involves

[1] "The fact that a category lives subjectively in the act of the knowing mind is no proof that the category does not at the same time truly express the nature of the reality known. It would be so only if we suppose the knowing subject to stand outside of the real universe altogether, and to come to inspect it from afar with mental spectacles of a foreign make. In that case, no doubt, the forms of his thought might be a distorting medium. But the case only requires to be stated plainly for its inherent absurdity to be seen. The knower is in the world which he comes to know, and the forms of his thought, so far from being an alien growth or an imported product, are themselves a function of the whole. . . . Unless we consider existence a bad joke, we have no option save tacitly to presuppose the harmony of the subjective function with the nature of the universe from which it springs." (Andrew Seth, Two Lectures on Theism, pp. 18, 19.)

overwhelming embarrassment to our rational and ethical life, it is reasonable to regard any one of these mental forms as objectively valid until convincing proof of the contrary is furnished. In the view of some thinkers the possibility of such proof being developed is not to be conceded, as opening too wide a door to scepticism. But, certainly, it is conceivable that the categories (the so-called forms of "intuition" as well as those of "thought" being included under this term) do not all stand on a precise parity as regards objective validity, though all are equally original as mental forms. Consequently, while it would make a fatal embarrassment to reason to surrender them in a body as respects their objective application, it might not be a necessity of mental integrity and consistency to assert that application for every one of them, that is, in the sense of making all of them, without exception, to hold good for the realm of things, over and above the rôle which they fulfill in finite minds generally as constant forms for the representation of things. Now the history of speculation shows that the concept of space is one that is well adapted to provoke philosophical questioning. As a mental form it is not on a precise parity with some others, since it has obvious application only to a part of reality, namely the sensible; and in its peculiar character it affords a good field for a duel between common-sense and metaphysics. On the one hand is the well-nigh invincible force of spontaneous conviction respecting the objective reality of space. On the other hand is the difficulty of defining space as real and giving it a consistent relation to the First Cause. If the terms of being are employed in the definition, something else than space is described; and, of course, the terms of not-being, or of purely ideal or intellectual being, cannot be used to set forth that which by hypothesis is objectively real. If space is made independent of the First Cause, a species of dualism is affirmed, limitation is put upon God and He is no longer represented as the fountain of all reality. If, on the other hand, space is

regarded as originated and dependent, as being at once the product of energy and objectively real, it ought to express some kind of energy; and yet who makes any kind of energy a part of the concept of space? The difficulty of the subject from this point of view is well illustrated by the remarks of Samuel Harris. He pronounces very emphatically for the conclusion that it will not do to deny the objective reality of space. Nevertheless, when he considers the subject in its divine relation, he says: "Space and time have no reality except as forms or constituent elements, eternal and archetypal in the absolute reason."[1] Now we surmise that this statement will be found as crucifying to common-sense, or spontaneous conviction, as the general doctrine of the ideality of space which the learned theologian has so resolutely rejected. The statement appears certainly to make space, in its intrinsic relation to the *divine mind*, simply ideal or subjective. But if space can logically be regarded as simply ideal for the divine mind, then the necessary verdict would seem to be that it takes rank with mental forms, and subsists only as a subjective reality; at any rate, if it is to have other reality than this, it must be by creation — by projection from the ideal into the actual — and the supposition of a real objective space which is the product of creative efficiency is attended, as was noticed, with very appreciable difficulties. Speculative perplexities of this sort have led some thinkers to conclude that while space is the mental form for cognizing things, it is not a form or condition of things themselves. As the cause of our perception of sound or color is quite unlike the effect, so is it, they claim, in case of the perception of space. The objective reality is a complex system of dynamics. To the impact of this upon the sensorium, the mind responds with its amazing faculty of interpretation, and gives, in place of the unpicturable relations of forces or energies, the variegated

[1] Philosophical Basis of Theism, p. 203.

scene of the external world. This doctrine, it will be observed, does not make our spatial representations of objects arbitrary. The representations in all their details are determined by the qualities of the objects; only the outward cause, as in the perception of color or sound, is unlike the exhibition of it which takes place in the mind. In short, the doctrine of the ideality of space is no less compatible with the supposition of a real, orderly, and marvellously diversified external world than is the most realistic doctrine that can be framed on this subject.

The attempt to construe the concept of time involves similar difficulties. The stickler for the objective reality of time may be confronted with such puzzling questions as the following: How many years old was God before the creation of the world? If it be said that He was an infinite number of years old, how is the congruity between the terms "infinite" and "number" to be conceived? What was God doing in the time preceding creation, say for such a period of years as may be expressed by a line of figures reaching to the fixed star Sirius and back again? Did God find time already at hand, or did He create it? If the former alternative be taken, how does it comport with His absolute supremacy, or with the notion of a unitary ground of the universe, that He should have this rival to His being? If the other alternative be chosen, how are we to conceive of the energy which, it would seem, must belong to time as an objective, created entity? Furthermore, the question insinuates itself, How are we to construe real time in relation to the notions of past, present and future? To confine time to the present seems pretty much to annihilate it, since the present is but a line without any measurable breadth. On the other hand, the past can hardly be regarded as really subsistent, and the future is not yet. Thus our real time seems to fall into two halves neither of which is real. These are difficulties which no ordinary wit can surmount, and they do not exhaust the list which confronts the realistic thesis on the nature of time.

Whether the better alternative is to pronounce against the objective reality of either space or time need not be determined here. The pertinent consideration is, that there is a general presupposition in favor of the conclusion that the mental forms which condition our cognition of external reality have objective validity; and that consequently no one of them ought to be denied such validity unless the denial is required for the satisfaction of reason. A rule of this kind provides for the due security of intellectual confidence. Spontaneous impressions, the ready verdicts of common sense, have to be rectified on some points by the critical exercise of reason. This is a fact which is known to everyone who passes in any degree below the surface of things. The only proper demand is that the rectification should not be hastily precipitated, and that adequate proof should be given that it is truly required for the satisfaction of reason.

It may be worth while to add that by reason we mean man's rational faculty, or power of judgment, viewed as dealing with all available data. Taken in this sense it is a valid criterion. What satisfies the total requirement of our rational life meets the highest demand that we can make. If one is disposed to suggest that perhaps our intellectual satisfaction is intrinsically of no consequence, and so may not be in the line of truth, we reply that if we are to begin by discrediting our faculties, or passing a sentence of virtual self-annihilation, it is foolish to reason either about the conditions of knowledge or any other subject. Speech on that basis would have no sane office.

As regards the claims of the "speculative reason" and the "practical reason," respectively, there seems to be no good warrant for pushing either aside in favor of the other. While it is true that no weaving together of speculative or ideal elements can give substantial proof of the actual, it is also true that a thought-ideal, which is not seen to be incongruous with the actual, may give to the mind a rest and satisfaction that it cannot secure in limiting itself to matters of observation or

experience proper. The satisfaction in question, in order to make much of a basis of rational certainty, needs, of course, not to be evanescent or merely personal. It must survive in the face of all opposing forces, and serve as a perpetual spring in the inner life of men. The thought-ideal which does not show itself, after fair opportunity, fitted to establish itself as an element in the life of the race, or at least in the better conditioned portion of the same, has little worth for knowledge.

VI. — A Warrant for Believing that the World is a Subject for the Interpretation of Reason.

The necessary forms of thought serve as a constitutional bond between the knowing subject and objective reality. The presupposition that they have objective validity is a presupposition that the outer world is adjusted to reason and open to its interpretation. The full justification of this presupposition can be seen only in a comprehensive view of man's relations. It is proper, however, to notice here a subjective ground for the reality of the adjustment in question. In whatever way it may arise, there can be no doubt as to the felt obligation within us to order our lives according to reason. Now the natural inference is that the universe in which the rational life is to be lived is coördinated with reason. To suppose that the world is a vast frivolity, caprice, or illusion, while the inhabitant must be rational, is to conjure up a gratuitous and depressing enigma. In proportion, then, as needless self-buffeting or self-contradiction is unadulterated foolishness, place must be given to the presupposition that the world is conformable to reason. This, of course, does not mean that it is transparent to limited or undeveloped reason, but only that intrinsically it is adjusted to reason, or is a subject for its interpretation. The most important items in the interpretation of external nature will be touched upon subsequently.

VII. — Grounds for Rational Inference supplied by Experience of Volitional Energy and of Various Classes of Feelings.

While Kant was wrong in questioning the objective validity of the categories, he was right in assuming their barrenness apart from experience. As method cannot take the place of subject-matter, but has its function only in dealing with a given subject-matter, so the mental forms have significance only in connection with experience, for the rational interpretation of which they are the constitutional means. Knowledge of reality requires experience of the real, interaction between the cognitive faculty and some form of reality.

The reality which is presented to the cognitive faculty, or the intellect, as it is otherwise called, may be subjective as well as objective. If experience of external nature through the medium of sense-perception is a ground for rational and far-reaching inference, so also is the experience of volitional activity and of various classes of feelings. Facts in the latter range are as unmistakably facts as those in the former range, and therefore as clearly invite to scientific investigation.

It would take us out of our proper course to notice at length the inferences which may be drawn from the facts of the inner experience; but a few words may be said to illustrate their important relation to mental certitude on questions of high concern.

Take, in the first place, the experience of volitional energy. We know ourselves as repeatedly putting forth acts of will. We seem to ourselves to be free in these acts, that is, to have a veritable power of choosing between alternatives. Practically nothing can beat out of our minds this conviction of free-will. Theoretically, also, it is found to harmonize with or to explain fundamental facts which otherwise are utterly opaque. It makes errors and sins chargeable to the misdirected faculties of individuals, whereas the opposing theory of

an all-embracing necessity, as leaving no room for misdirection of any sort, cancels the proper notion of both error and sin, and thus runs into stultification of the intellect and the moral sense alike. In fine, the warrant for predicating free-will is as clear as that for any truth which depends in the least degree upon inference.

Now this freedom is a pregnant fact. Once admit it, and man's intrinsic relation to the supernatural is brought to view. Can necessity produce freedom? Can the self-determining spring from the purely automatic? Can the mechanism of nature generate that which transcends all the principles and laws of mechanism? If not, then man has a higher parentage than nature; his freedom is a badge of kinship to a supernatural power which has made him in its own likeness.

In a similar manner the experience of various kinds of feelings or emotions affords to the intellect a significant outlook. The testimony which they offer may need to be carefully scrutinized. The individual and the transient mingle more or less with the sources of the feelings. They are shaped by ignorance, misconception, imagination, and perversity, as well as by better causes. Still they are facts, and in spite of all inconstancy and contrariety furnish grounds for rational inference. Suppose it to be ascertained that there are certain feelings which expand and ennoble any life to which they furnish the dominant incentive. Suppose, further, that certain assumed truths and agencies are found to be uniquely efficient to enthrone these feelings and to secure for them a constant reign. Then manifestly, in proportion as the ennobling of human personality is regarded as a true end, credit must be given to the truths and agencies in question.

Now the former supposition requires no confirmation. It does not need to be demonstrated that the feeling of personal obligation proclaims for man a high calling, and that, in proportion as this feeling becomes intense and constant it tends to uplift the life from apathy and weakness into a healthful

earnestness and efficiency. It does not need to be proved that a love such as Paul celebrates in the thirteenth chapter of First Corinthians is intrinsically excellent. No more is it necessary to justify reverence for holiness, dread of moral contamination, the humility which readily accepts known dependence, and aspiration after ideal goodness. Feelings of this order need only to be apprehended in their true character to be approved. They are known, if recognized at all, to belong to the very crown of inward nobility. It is seen that to make them habitual would be the glorification of the human spirit.

The second supposition may not be able to claim so unanimous a witness, since it rests upon historical as well as other data. Still, it is not arbitrary to conclude that what is best and holiest in feeling has in the gospel revelation — in the person, work, and truth of Jesus Christ — an incomparable spring. A sober induction leaves no escape from this conclusion. Grant that so-called Christian history has been stained by many enormities, — they are so plainly in contradiction to the spirit and precept of the gospel, that they but make a dark background for the brighter exhibition of the person and truth of Christ. Facts of this order reveal what the gospel has to contend against, while those of a contrary order show that it has efficacy to contend successfully. Facts of the latter kind are not scanty. He who will gather them up and reflect upon them need not lack for a fair equivalent of the Revelator's sight of the New Jerusalem coming down from heaven. To an innumerable multitude it has been made entirely credible that the voice of Christ stilled the waves of the sea, for the tumult of passion and sin within them has been stilled as they have come to Him in faith and self-surrender. In spiritual fellowship with Him they have obtained inward harmony, hope for moral conflict, love and humility for self-denying service. From the days of the apostles and apologists this story of Christian experience has been repeated, and thousands of new voices and changed lives add every year their

confirmatory witness. Now the force of such evidence cannot easily be evaded. There is at least a presumption in favor of the essential truth, sanctity, and rightful supremacy of that which has this unique power to awaken in the human spirit the deepest and most efficacious emotions.

In a well-guarded view of the importance of the feelings it will not be overlooked that they fulfill their normal function only in close conjunction with the intellect. In relation to cognition, they supply grounds which need to be supplemented by rational inference. In order to issue into knowledge proper they must be viewed in their relations, and this involves a distinctively intellectual activity. Doubtless as the mind responds to sense-impressions with so swift a reference to the external cause that sensation and perception seem to be merged in one, so feelings that have a moral or religious value may be so readily and spontaneously construed that the act of interpretation shall not be distinctly noted in consciousness. But the celerity of an intellectual function is no disproof of its importance. Feelings make their full contribution to man's rational life only through interpretation. Moreover, there is often much need for a painstaking interpretation, so as not rashly to transfer to an objective range that which has only a personal or subjective source. To ignore this requirement is to open the door to the flights of an unhealthy mysticism. Such flights may promise great enlightenment, but they afford rather symbols for the imagination than the secure treasure of knowledge. He who goes out of himself in an ecstasy may possibly bring back from his experience in the time of self-abdication a new sense of mystery ; but he will not return with any new means of explaining mysteries to others or even to himself. If anyone wishes proof of this let him take a comparative view of all trance-like experiences and theosophic flights of which record has been left, and attempt to deduce from them any congruous or intelligible system. The ample testimony of history supports the conclusion that the consti-

tuted order of the universe has not placed any premium upon intellectual indolence. An exclusive intellectualism may doubtless issue in ethical and religious barrenness; but a one-sided emotionalism is quite as likely to run into a forfeiture of high interests. "A religion divorced from earnest and lofty thought has always, down the whole history of the Church, tended to become weak, jejune, and unwholesome; while the intellect, deprived of its rights within religion, has sought its satisfaction without, and developed into godless rationalism." [1]

If it is a gross error to make feelings a substitute for the intellectual process, it savors at least of exaggeration to suppose that they can afford, even under the closest inspection, decisive evidence for the details of doctrine. As was asserted above, the evidence which comes from this source is indeed important. It relates, however, only to the more prominent and practical items of the theistic and Christian systems. An analysis of the feelings of dependence and obligation doubtless affords a warrant for the idea of God; but it does not supply distinct data for settling the manifold speculative questions which may be raised respecting the divine nature. So also a true inspection of the new consciousness which springs up in connection with an inner appropriation of the gospel points to the reality of a gracious deliverance through Jesus Christ; but it cannot determine the details of the redemptive economy. The grounds of judgment here, it is true, are largely subjective. There is a chance to assail the

[1] James Orr, The Christian View of God and the World, pp. 23, 24. The following may fitly be subjoined: "Feeling viewed as the foundation of thought is great. . . . But feeling used as a substitute for reason is one of the least worthy of things." (Gordon, The Christ of To-Day, p. 60.) "Unless you lift it up into the light of thought and examine it often, how do you know into what your cherished religious ideal may not have rotted in the darkness of your emotions?" (Royce The Religious Aspect of Philosophy, p. 13.) "To say that Christianity is a life, therefore it is not a doctrine, is to reason very badly. We should rather say, Christianity is a life, and therefore it engenders doctrine; for man cannot live his life without thinking it. The two things are not hostile; they go together." (Sabatier, Outlines of a Philosophy of Religion, p. 24.)

critic, who limits the scope of the evidence, with the suggestion that he has not been blessed with an adequate experience. He is not, however, entirely defenseless. He can appeal to the judgment of thoughtful minds to confirm the verdict that the feelings are not so sharply diagrammed in consciousness that they can reflect the distinctions of a detailed theological system. He can also cite the fact, that men who seem to be imbued equally with an evangelical temper and equally desirous to know the whole truth can differ very widely in doctrinal conceptions. He will thus have sufficient ground to stand upon while he is waiting for some one to prove him in the wrong by actually developing from a simple analysis of emotional experience a doctrinal system which shall not appear arbitrary and far-fetched.

The connection calls only for a consideration of feelings as related to knowledge; but it will be a pardonable digression to notice briefly the relation of feelings to personal religion or piety. It is well known that Schleiermacher located the essence of personal religion in feeling, and especially emphasized the feeling of dependence. Religious feeling, he claimed, is a self-consciousness which is at the same time a consciousness of a dependent relation to God. In its specifically Christian sense it is a consciousness of relation to Jesus of Nazareth as the Redeemer of men. Schleiermacher argued that religion cannot consist in knowledge, since, in that event, the amount of knowledge respecting ethical and dogmatic truths would be the measure of religion — a plainly inadmissible hypothesis. No more can it consist in action, since the moral worth of action depends on the impelling motive; and besides, there are internal states which must be pronounced pious apart from all consideration of outward manifestation. This reasoning, as Schleiermacher took pains to state, does not imply that knowledge and action are of no consequence in relation to religion. As accessories, as means of nurture and manifestation, they are of very high importance.

It may reasonably be conceded to Schleiermacher that a purely intellectual act, as such, cannot be credited with moral worth, or be counted intrinsically religious. A speculative thought about God, taken simply in that character, has no moral worth, whether it be in the mind of saint, angel, or devil. Doubtless to pursue knowledge for a good end, to think for a godly purpose, is morally worthy and in that sense religious. But then, the religion lies rather in the self-determination to the intellectual activity in view of a godly purpose, than in the intellectual activity itself. The former is immediately religious ; the latter is so only instrumentally, or by virtue of its subordination to the former. It may likewise be conceded to Schleiermacher that feelings of a certain order are intrinsically of religious value. Pure benevolence, unselfish love, penitence for sin, and awe for moral order are subject to no discount. They must be immediately approved as part and parcel of true piety.

The representation of Schleiermacher needs, however, to be qualified in a twofold respect. His emphasis upon the feeling of *dependence* was somewhat too exclusive, and he failed properly to distinguish and exalt the self-determining faculty, the holy will which is central to the morally worthy, at the heart of the truly religious.

Having made one digression in the interest of a definition of personal religion, we may as well make a second by further defining religion on the side of its relation to morality. If we take the latter in its broad sense we find the two to be distinguished mainly in respect of relative stress and order of thought. The primary point of view in morality is the moral constitution and what it demands in relation to one's self and to one's fellows. But morality cannot stop here. In so far as the moral constitution and experience point to the existence of a supernatural or divine person, morality calls for a suitable bearing toward that person, for an essentially religious relation, and out of this relation come added light and incentive for

Highest thing in morality, — obedience
Lowest " " Religion faith
Highest " " love

the whole sphere of duty. Religion recognizes at the very start man's relations to a supernatural power or to a divine person. That is its fundamental and controlling point of view. But it cannot stop here. The relation to the divine person cannot be taken in an isolated fashion. Right relation to God is incompatible with an immoral relation of any sort, whether with one's self or with one's fellows. If religion does not begin with a well-rounded code of morality it cannot end without one. Thus the order is not the same and the stress may not be just the same in both cases, but no important element in the one can be ignored in the other. Both accentuate obligation, but neither stops with the bare idea of *obligation* as opposed to the notion of a *good.* Morality finds a legitimate incentive to duty in the notion of a supreme good for one's self and one's fellows, and religion ever looks to a divine person as at once a standard of holiness and a fountain of blessedness.

VIII. — Grounds of Rational Inference Furnished by Historical Continuity of Ideas or Beliefs.

Individual experience finds a vast supplement in race experience. Whatever has been continually repeated in thought, feeling, or action affords a ground for inference. In this connection, however, we notice only the first of these factors. The point of inquiry is the extent to which ideas or beliefs which have been handed down more or less as a race contribution can fix the content of knowledge for the individual or bind his reason.

The actual force of historical connections is undoubtedly enormous. Each generation is a schoolmaster to the succeeding, during the term of its minority. Beliefs, like household goods, are passed along from parents to children. The type in one family is influenced by that of neighboring fam-

ilies. The type of the neighborhood is influenced by that of the tribe or nation. Where national bounds are clearly marked and of long standing, the national type is likely to be firmly compacted, and thus to serve as a strong barrier against innovations.

That the arrangement operates beneficially in important respects is quite evident. By community of thought bonds of union are established ; and the lives of men, instead of remaining barren in isolation or clashing in wasteful confusion, are woven into great social fabrics. Along with social benefits there are also distinct intellectual advantages. The opportunities of orderly society are themselves favorable to mental acquisition. Moreover, the continuity which is established secures to each new generation the advantage of inheriting a definite mental capital. The inheritance may be defective in one point or another ; but that fact does not disprove its utility as a whole. It is an uncritical imagination which leads anyone to suppose that if children could keep clear of the tuition of their elders until, by virtue of their intellectual maturity, they can think for themselves, they would thereby escape the warping of prejudice, and so come to sound beliefs. The difficulty is that an empty mind can make little or no progress toward maturity. The mind grows by exercising itself with ideas, and defective as the inherited stock may be for any generation, it is likely to be better than its childish capacity could fashion for itself.

Persistence of an idea through successive ages establishes a certain presumption in its favor. It is to be noticed, however, that the strength of the presumption is not necessarily in proportion to the antiquity of the idea or the extent of its constituency. The amount of real mental scrutiny and testing to which a notion has been subjected is rather the true measure of the presumption. Now that amount is far from being determined merely by length of time or breadth of geographical area. By accident, by error, or by fraud, an idea

may receive an accredited place in a system, and then be upheld and propagated by the prestige which belongs to the system. A powerful ecclesiasticism may so innoculate its subjects with the conviction that the creed is holy in every part, and cannot be denied in a single article without peril of damnation, that critical inquiry shall for the most part be paralyzed. In fact, there have been so much indolence and passivity in the face of loud-speaking authority, and the race has been so largely befooled, that something might be said in behalf of the presumption that on all disputed points the truth lies rather with the few than with the many. The better statement, however, comes from putting together the considerations just noted, and may be framed in terms like these: Long-continued and wide prevalence of an idea or belief creates a presumption in its favor, provided it seems to have stood by the free judgment of men, and not to have been sustained by extraneous means.

From this standpoint it may be said that substantial universality of an idea or belief, its appearance and persistence within the compass of varied and contrasted systems, furnishes a strong presumption that it has at least a substratum of truth. To lightly pass over its claims would savor of captiousness. But, on the other hand, even historical universality cannot forestall the critical exercise of reason. Repetition of a thought makes something less than a necessity of thinking. The mind affirms the latter not on the ground that a thing has been reckoned true so many times in the past, but in virtue of the insight that it must always be reckoned true where rational procedure is duly observed. Anything which is not included in this insight, though it may make a good provisional ground to rest upon, falls theoretically under liability of more or less revision.

The attitude which is actually taken toward the historical deposit is apt to be affected in no small degree by a moral element. If, on the one hand, excessive vanity and repugnance

to restraint may prompt to a reckless disparagement of the wisdom and authority of the past, on the other hand, love of ease, intolerance of opposition, and thirst for supremacy, may prompt to an arbitrary closure against critical investigation through appeals to alleged sanctities of antiquity. The erratic flights of an intemperate liberalism may be matched by the caprice of an indolent and self-confident orthodoxy; a Vatican council may vie with the extravagance of a Jacobin club. It requires, indeed, a high measure of unselfish devotion to the truth to keep to the right point between the two extremes. The task is the more difficult because its fulfillment involves progressive readjustment of one's position. A degree of deference to given antecedents which is appropriate to one stage of mental development might indicate, if continued beyond that stage, an unseemly apathy or servility of spirit. Now, to know when and how much to change one's attitude, so as to keep equally clear of intellectual idolatry and intellectual arrogance, implies a perspicuity of vision which certainly cannot exist apart from perfect sincerity, and which even that can guarantee but partially.

IX. — The Function of Reason in Relation to Revelation and the Possible Service of the Latter to the Former.

In the foregoing discussion, ideas and beliefs have been viewed simply as products of the ordinary operation of human faculties. The supposition that the historical evolution has included a process of divine revelation will of course involve special considerations.

It would anticipate the theme of a later chapter to discuss here the fact of revelation, or to look closely into its nature and conditions, but a glance may properly be taken at the general idea of revelation as related to the exercise of reason.

If revelation be taken not simply as a fact but also as a unit, then obviously the mind that accepts the fact of the revelation must subscribe equally to all its contents. To challenge or to qualify the authority of any part would at once involve a denial that the revelation can be taken strictly as a unit.

But what is valid ground for taking an alleged revelation strictly as a unit? Certainly there can be no *a priori* determination of a point like this. It may, perhaps, be said that the supposition of anything less than complete infallibility in every part would open the door to questioning and incertitude, and so would be inconvenient. But it is not to be taken for granted that convenience is a test of reality. It has no proper claim to that office, unless an extravagant breadth is given to the term, and it is made to cover an unequivocal and universal demand of rational life. No religion will concede to a rival that its oracles can be judged by the mere convenience of those accepting them. Such a canon is worthless in dealing with outside parties, and is essentially too arbitrary and unsubstantial to control a fundamental conclusion. The providential order of the world points to the verdict that development is a much higher end than convenience. Development of the better type, however, comes from free contact with a worthy content, such as is intrinsically fitted to be food for the higher nature, rather than from the constraint of formal authority. Quite too high a value is attached to convenience when it forecloses investigation and is made the standard for judging an extended array of facts. It is not and cannot be certain beforehand that in a vast cycle of revelations, mediated through human instrumentality under varying conditions, all parts and items are upon a precise parity as respects elevation above error. The general fact of a revelation, however well-established it may be, does not determine what traces may have been left upon it by the human mediums. So far as that can be determined at all, it must be by an inductive process

which takes account of all pertinent facts, including the relation of agreement or discrepancy between the parts.

This line of representation would be a superfluity were it not for an easy-going assumption which still has some currency. While it is commonly granted that the fact of a revelation must be established upon grounds that are satisfactory to reason, it is sometimes assumed that the revelation, if accepted at all, must forthwith be taken as a unit, and its whole content be placed beyond rational criticism. The assumption is arbitrary, and collapses when the false standard of convenience on which it depends is set aside. It is entirely conceivable that some of the sacred writers may have been more responsive to the divine message than others, and that in no mind beside that of Jesus Christ was a perfect vehicle provided for the revealing Spirit. It is not asserted here that such was the fact, but only that there is no summary method for establishing the opposite conclusion.

The acceptance, then, of a revelation, especially of one that is comprehensive and manifold, cannot foreclose all judgment upon its contents. The office of revelation is not to confound and suppress reason, but rather to afford light and guidance. To suppress reason would be to close the door against revelation. A blank is no subject for a revelation. Only a rational nature, living and active, is a fit subject; and such a nature cannot apprehend what is contradictory to reason. To ask reason to contradict itself is to demand mental disruption and chaos.

The prerogative of reason to pursue the path of honest inquiry in relation to the contents of revelation needs doubtless to be exercised with much discretion. For, what reason really demands may be in various connections quite problematical. It is an unfounded conceit which is indulged in when the reason in man is taken as a fixed or full-grown entity, always equal to itself. While all the elements of the faculty were given in the original outfit of the mind, there may be

such an increase of approved data, and such an enlargement of power to deal with complex data, as shall greatly extend the field of rational insight. What seemed impossible at one stage may, therefore, be approved at another. It is reasonable that the reason should be moderate and modest in dealing with an accepted revelation, or with oracles which, on the whole, seem to have fulfilled the function of revelation. But certainly it cannot be asked to hold both of two statements which, though each taken alone is quite possible, are seen to be contradictory to one another. No more can it be asked to assent to any individual statement which is distinctly contrary to rational insight. If aught in either line is found within the compass of an accredited revelation it must be regarded as the product of human fallibilty. To attempt to give it any better character would be to dishonor the author of the revelation for the sake of affirming the perfect agency of the instruments.

The main points in the discussion may be included in this summary : (1) There is no theoretic necessity for taking revelation, or the whole body of oracles representative of a dispensation, strictly as a unit. (2) Reason is allowed to inspect the contents of an accredited revelation as well as to make a preliminary judgment on the general fact of a revelation having been given. (3) As reason, in this use of the term, denotes a faculty which is under training, and may progress to wider and deeper insight in relation to various problems, it should observe the dictates of prudence and sobriety in judging the contents of an accredited revelation. (4) It is possible that what is merely improbable to reason at a certain stage may be approved by revelation, but never can it come within the province of any authority to give credit to plain contradictions or to enforce belief in that which is distinctly opposed to rational intuition.

If anything needs to be added to these points, it is an explicit emphasis upon the truth that revelation itself may be

a very eminent factor in the improvement of the standpoint or conditions of rational judgment. It was a cardinal error of the old deistic speculation that it put an abstraction in the place of man's actual faculty, a fictitiously independent and complete reason in place of a growing power of rational insight. Once grant the fact of growth or development, and immediately the notion of tuition, guidance, assistance, becomes pertinent, — the notion that revelation may conduct to a wider and more certain outlook than could be obtained apart from its agency.

X. — Relation of the Idea of God to Rational Certainty.

In enumerating the conditions of rational certainty it is not possible to ignore the goal and summit of all thinking, the idea of God. It enforces entrance by its intrinsic relation to the subject.

If the idea of God is not directly needed to guarantee the trustworthiness of our faculties, it is indirectly required for that end, as alone providing an intelligible and satisfactory account of our faculties. Some sort of a background of the universe as known in experience must be postulated. To postulate a background which darkens and dwarfs the deepest facts of the intellectual and moral life, which logically consigns those facts to the mean category of illusions, is to assail the very foundation of rational certainty. We are left to confusion and despair in the face of so radical an incongruity. In order not to eliminate our standing-ground we must have a postulate which does not turn our mental and moral life into insoluble enigmas; and that postulate — as we shall attempt to show presently — is alone the existence of a personal God.

It may be true that we assume the trustworthiness of our

faculties in deducing the idea of God. But it is no less true that the harmony of the idea with the intellectual and moral demands of our being rightly seconds and confirms our primitive confidence in our faculties. To pursue this line of thought makes no vicious circle in reasoning. We have here simply an illustration of the fact that in a consistent system the members are mutually supporting.

CHAPTER II.

THE EXISTENCE OF THE INFINITE PERSON.

I. — Propriety of Introducing the Topic of the Divine Existence at this Point.

The more complete view of the divine nature is properly postponed till the scope and authority of revelation have been duly considered. But as we cannot be well-prepared for the thought of a revelation without some conception of a revealer, or possible source of specific disclosures, it is appropriate to justify at this point the general notion of a Divine Person. Proof of the existence of such a person is of course in one sense proof of the fact of a revelation, since He can be known to exist only by being manifested or revealed. Manifestation, however, may be of different orders and degrees. On the one hand, the facts of common observation and experience may be the means of manifestation. On the other hand, the world with its standing arrangements may serve as the theatre, and the means of manifestation be a special series of events, a history peculiarly shaped and directed. Now it is evidently the normal method to begin with the order of facts which by hypothesis is common rather than exceptional, and then take the warrant which it affords for the existence of a personal God as a starting-point in weighing the claims of the special revelation. The contents of the assumed revelation may, doubtless, themselves attest more or less clearly the existence of a supreme intelligence and will, since they may convey an impression of superhuman wisdom and virtue. Still, it is an

advantage in defending the claims of a specific revelation, or revealed system, to be able to come to the argument on a well-established theistic basis.

II.—Definition of the Terms "Person" and "Infinite," and Proof of the Compatibility of Personality with Infinitude.

The word "person" denotes a being characterized by self-knowledge and by self-determination or will. In the normal personality feeling is also doubtless fundamental. By the term "infinite" is indicated the fact that the person here contemplated has no limits which are not either self-imposed or demanded by His perfection.

This definition of the infinite, it is believed, will make no trouble for real thinking. So long as we keep out of the region of abstraction and direct our attention to actual being, we can frame no other consistent notion of the infinite. A profound reverence for etymology, it is true, may insist that the infinite is that which rejects all limits whatsoever. But must the infinite be unbounded in such sense that it shall submit to no barriers against self-contradiction? Is not infinitude a bar against finitude? Is not unmeasured power a bar against impotence? Can supreme wisdom co-exist with blank ignorance? To ask such questions is to answer them. Nothing can be plainer than that the positing of a perfection is equivalent to the exclusion of an imperfection. Whatever has the perfection is shut out from the imperfection. As regards the item of self-limitation, that implies only that the infinite, forming plans in unblemished wisdom and entering upon their execution, may be bound by self-consistency to shape action in conformity with the plans.

From this standpoint we may estimate the sagacity of those who deny the personality of God in the interest of His infini-

tude. For the sake of affirming an abstract greatness, or one which has no definable content, they exclude such fundamental factors of real greatness as self-knowledge and self-determination. They shut up God in eternal darkness, and place Him under the limitations of invincible ignorance, in order that they may set Him above all limitations.

In this procedure, there seems to be an implicit assumption that only the indefinite is great; that accordingly the infinitely great is only one step from the infinite void, if not identical with the same. A noted saying of Spinoza gives a formula for this assumption. It runs thus: "Omnis determinatio est negatio." The maxim, it may be allowed, has an application. In logical classification we proceed from the larger to the smaller group by adding some new characteristic. Each addition narrows the circle of the objects comprehended. The determination is in this sense a negation. But a convenient method of regarding objects in their class relations is one thing; a standard of intrinsic greatness is another thing. The mere pushing out of a line to a wide circuit gives no true image of greatness, apart from a consideration of what falls within the line. Any amount of nothingness amounts simply to nothing. Any amount of inferior being amounts to less than a supremely exalted personality, who, as possessed of a free creative will, is competent to produce any amount of inferior being. Deny such a will to the Divine Being and you make what actually exists the measure of His ability to produce. As being under absolute necessity, He cannot produce either more or less than He does. The impersonal God has no power to add a single star to the number which at any time brightens the sky. The personal God, on the other hand, may be conceived as able, by virtue of a free creative will, to transcend the existing order and to bring in any number of new worlds or world-systems. Plainly we are off the track of rational procedure when we attempt to construe greatness in a vague extensive sense. Mere bulk is a lower category than amount of actual and possible agency.

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Being is great by quality, infinitely great as being above all qualitative improvement. To honor, then, to the utmost the thought of God, we must predicate of Him the loftiest and most glorious attributes. To leave out intelligence and will makes a fatal deficit. As well blot out sun, moon, and stars, in order to enlarge one's notion of the encompassing heaven, as to deny to God, in the name of His infinitude, the lofty predicates of personality.

An objection against the personality of the infinite has been found in the supposed requirements of self-consciousness. The consciousness of self, it is claimed, springs out of the opposition of subject and object. Self is revealed only in reaction against a not-self. Therefore, since the infinite has no rival to its eternal being, no object set over against itself, it has no means of self-consciousness, and so lacks the distinctive feature of personality.

An assumption of the essential passivity of mind lurks in this objection. It seems to be imagined that there can be no positive mental states save as they are wrought by external agency, no mental activities save in response to a stimulus from without. For, if the states or activities be assumed, there is evidently no lack of an object of cognition (or of a positive subject-matter of consciousness). The only kind of object which can ever be immediately present to a consciousness like ours is already present. The states and activities are material for self-knowledge. They are at once a ground for the immediate feeling of self and for a reflective consideration of self. What, then, it must be asked, is the warrant for affirming the essential passivity of mind? No analysis of experience can discover that this is the character even of finite mind. On the contrary, it is the consciousness of subjective energy which is the principal means of interpreting to us the notion of force generally. Doubtless the undeveloped or feebly developed mind is largely dominated by the impressions which come from the physical environment. But an experi-

ence which is explained by special conditions does not declare the essential nature of mind. If it be true that the infant is born a slave of physical nature, it is also true that he may advance to a relative lordship. Not a few hints are given us in the human range that mind is intrinsically the power of initiation, the original spring of energy. Accordingly it is no speculative rashness to conceive that the infinite mind, notwithstanding the absence of external stimulus, may be alive, energetic, inclusive of all loftiest feelings and purposes, and thus have abundant means of self-consciousness. Indeed, there is good reason for concluding with Lotze that complete self-consciousness, or personality in the highest sense, can be predicated of the infinite alone. A being in order to give a full account of itself should comprehend fully its laws and essential relations. But the finite spirit cannot do this. It is under laws which are imposed from a higher source, and stands in relations which are not of its own choosing. Being thus implicated with that which is beyond itself, and which it did not originate, it has no security of being able to explore its own nature and significance to the utmost. The explanation of itself lies in part beyond the sphere of experience, beyond the province over which it has mastery. But the infinite having naught back of itself, and being conditioned by nothing which is not the product of its own volition or the implication of its own perfection, has to wrest no secret from a foreign field in order to reach self-understanding, and so may be completely luminous to itself.[1]

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[1] See Mikrokosmos, Buch ix, Kap. iv. The following from Bowne sets the main truths respecting self-consciousness in a clear light. "There are two factors in human self-knowledge: (1) a direct feeling of self; and (2) a conception of self or of the powers and properties of self. This conception of self is developed, but the feeling of self is present from the beginning. The child has little or no conception of itself, but it has the liveliest experience of itself. This experience of self is quite independent of all antithesis of subject and object, and is underived. But allowing all that can be claimed for the development of our self-consciousness, it does not lie in the notion of self-consciousness that it must be developed. An

III.— Comparative View of Anti-Theistic Theories.

We conclude then that we are not debarred from the theistic argument by a speculative foreclosure, since personality is not found contradictory of infinitude when the latter term is understood in a legitimate sense. In taking up that argument it will be best to scan in the first place the leading anti-theistic theories, since an exposure of their shortcomings will provide a suitable ground for estimating the positive supports of theistic faith.

As deism accepts the existence of a personal God, and only disputes or greatly limits His present agency in the world, it need not be noticed in the present connection. A formal consideration of agnosticism may also be waived. This will be the more appropriate since the professed agnostic hardly ever holds consistently to the neutral position on the question of the divine existence, but almost invariably insinuates a materialistic or pantheistic conception. His ostensible position will be virtually passed upon by the positive theistic argument, as will also the creed of formal atheism. The anti-theistic theories which call for our attention are accordingly materialism and pantheism.

At the first look these two theories appear widely contrasted. Materialism regards matter as filling out the whole category of being, so that mind, if not a definite quantum of matter, is only an effect or modification of matter. Pantheism, on the other hand, makes both mind and matter manifestations of a unitary being. Instead of regarding mind as secondary and resultant, it may make it coördinate with matter as was done by Spinoza,

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eternal self is metaphysically as possible as an eternal not-self. To say that because our self-consciousness is developed all self-consciousness must be developed, is just as rational as to say that all being must have a beginning because we have. It is to transfer to the independent all the limitations of the finite, which is the very thing the pantheist claims to abhor." (Studies in Theism, p. 274.)

or exalt it to a distinct primacy as was done by Fichte and also by Hegel. Materialism commonly finds God nowhere. Pantheism assumes to discover Him in all things.

In spite of this contrast, however, materialism and the typical Occidental pantheism are closely allied. The idea of creation is foreign to both. In both alike all change is imputed to necessitated evolution. If to the materialist the world is all, it is scarcely less to the pantheist, since he acknowledges no extra-mundane Deity, affirms God only as the inner life of the world, and allows to Him no further self-knowledge than is contained in the fragmentary reflection of Himself in finite consciousness. Indeed, when materialism becomes mystical and begins to insinuate that matter is something more than atoms operating under mechanical laws, that it is the seat of potencies which the ordinary terminology of physics is utterly unable to describe, it approximates very closely to pantheism. In the recent history of thought a materialistic pantheism, or pantheistic materialism, has not been an unknown product.

IV. — Economy of Assumptions shown not to be Characteristic of Anti-Theistic Theories.

As regards either materialism or pantheism there is small occasion for glorying in the fewness of the assumptions in which refuge must be taken. The materialist can make nothing of his atoms without motion. He must assume therefore the eternity of motion, or else predicate an absolute beginning of the same. Either conclusion is entirely beyond the range of experience, a pure assumption. Given a multitude of moving atoms, and there is not the slightest pledge that an orderly universe will result. Chaos rather than cosmos will be the outcome, unless the atoms are endowed with tendencies to combine in particular ways. Tacitly,

if not in outspoken terms, vast account must be made of tendencies which no analysis of matter has discovered, and the reality of which therefore has no guarantee outside of the demands of materialistic speculation. Still further, the fact of life has to be explained. Either life must have been eternal, or it must have sprung from not-living matter. If the former alternative is taken, the question arises as to how life was able to survive the intense heat of the primitive nebula; or, in case it is preferred to dispense with the nebular hypothesis, an account is demanded of the way in which the atoms became aggregated into world systems. If the second alternative be chosen, then a spontaneous generation must be assumed, which no observation has ever shown to be within the capacity of physical nature.

As for the pantheist, the impersonal, unconscious infinite with which he starts, is scarcely more adequate to explain the sum of reality than the primitive atoms of the materialist, and it is his custom accordingly to add in like manner a liberal supply of assumptions. Spinoza imports into his one infinite substance the dual characteristics of thought and extension, not by any process of deduction, but by sheer affirmation; and he also leaves entirely unexplained the correspondence between the thought series and the extension series, since he assumes that there is no interaction between them. Hegel makes the sweeping assumption that thought and being are identical, and that the logical evolution of thought mirrors the whole process of the unfoldment of the universe. Spencer, whose system is a species of materialistic pantheism,[1] attempts to get a starting-point for the evolution of the absolute by postulating the instability of the homogeneous — a speculative expedient which looks very much like founding difference upon blank identity.

Further illustration would be gratuitous. The hypothesis

[1] It has been characterized as an attempt to engraft Pantheism upon Positivism.

of an eternal self-conscious mind is quite as conceivable as the speculative items which must be assumed in these systems. Unless, therefore, the one or the other shows a superior congruity with important facts and interests, there is no reason for preferring it to the theistic theory, while an inferiority or relative failure in this respect would be adequate ground for its rejection.

V. — Criticism of Materialism.

A test of the sort just indicated is exceedingly trying to materialism. In the first place, it cannot construe the facts of cognition. According to a consistent materialism the knowing subject is simply a physical organism, an aggregation of atoms or material particles, any one of which is but a transient constituent. Since the organism is wholly composed of material particles, any conceivable change within it must be a change of these particles. But what other change can materialistic science, so long as it keeps to terms in the slightest degree intelligible to itself, specify for the particles, than one of motion or aggregation[1] (or something equally remote from all suggestion of mental facts)? A hasty imagination may indeed bring up the instance of the smitten chord, and suggest that as the resulting music is unlike the chord, so the result of a movement in the brain may be unlike the brain or any of its modifications that can be inspected. The supposed analogy, however, is entirely at fault. The smitten chord produces only vibrations in a material medium, and no

[1] Much scientific authority could be cited against the need of adding any qualifying clause. Thus Romanes says: "It is no longer a matter of keen-sighted speculation, but a matter of carefully demonstrated fact, that all our knowledge of the external world is nothing more than a knowledge of motion. For all the forms of energy have now been proved to be but modes of motion." (Mind, Motion and Monism, pp. 2, 3.)

music is found until we pass out of that which can be described in terms of matter, and come to that which can be described only in terms of consciousness. No other analogy is likely to render any better service. Keeping to terms intelligible to itself, materialistic science can predicate for the material particles of an organism no change but one of motion and aggregation. It follows then that if thoughts and feelings are to be ascribed to the material organism they must, in so far as they are accounted for at all, be identified with such realities as motions and aggregations of material particles. This means not merely that the motions and aggregations may serve as symbols of thoughts and feelings, for symbols have no use apart from an interpreter, who, by hypothesis, is not present; it means that the thoughts and feelings are strictly identical with motions and aggregations. In other words, the proper mental phenomena are denied, and that which has no perceived or thinkable resemblance to them is put in their place.[1] If not willing to accept this outcome the materialist must grant that, on his theory, mental phenomena appear magical and unaccountable.

With this difficulty is conjoined another which presents an equal challenge to materialistic theory. It was noticed in the preceding chapter that there must be a unitary subject of the mental life, and that the sensational psychology, as neglecting to provide such a subject, is condemned to failure. Now, materialism in its psychological theory is a branch of sensationalism, and shares in all the shortcomings of that system. It has no unitary subject. The physical organism is an aggregate of parts. The state of one atom may affect that of another, but it can never be identical therewith. A number of atoms or ultimate particles may have similar states, and in a loose rhetorical fashion these may be spoken of as making a common state; but in strictness, the states must be as many

[1] On the absurdity of identifying thought with a movement of brain-substance, see Paulsen, Introduction to Philosophy, pp. 82, 83.

as the atoms, otherwise we shall have individual particles which are without states, or states which are states of nothing. The separability of the atoms, the fact that they are continually passing out of the organism, also emphasizes the impossibility of finding in it the unitary subject required by the mental life. This irreducible plurality of shifting units can never be made to explain the unity of consciousness which conditions rational experience, or be harmonized with the memory which unites the past and the present.[1]

In its mystical phase, materialism may perhaps disguise in a measure these difficulties, but it cannot escape them without denying itself. Suppose matter is described as a double-faced reality, of which the inner face is manifested in mental phenomena; the question arises at once as to the relation between the two faces. If it be assumed that the inner is not determined by the outer, then the presence of the mental phenomena is no certain ground for inferring an outer reality in correspondence therewith, and the way is opened to doubt the existence of that reality, in other words, to surrender materialism in favor of idealism. If, on the other hand, the inner face is regarded as being, in its whole extent, determined by the outer face, that is, a resultant of purely physical causes, such as nerve vibrations, we come back, in effect, to the ordin-

[1] No serious account needs to be made of the supposition of a central atom in the brain which fills the place of a unitary subject, inasmuch as all other atoms in the brain communicate to it the effects made upon them severally. Physiology knows nothing about any such extraordinary atom. On the contrary it pronounces it mythical, and favors the conclusion that any very minute portion of the brain could be detached without destroying the mental life of the subject. "There is no cell," says William James, "or group of cells in the brain of such anatomical or functional preëminence as to appear to be the keystone or centre of gravity of the whole system." (Principles of Psychology, 1, 180.) "It is worthy of note," remarks Paulsen, "that the older attempts to find a point in the brain, the destruction of which would result in immediate death, have all proved futile. The ganglion of life assumed by Flourens does not exist; the patient survives the destruction of any portion of his brain, if it is not too extensive." (Introduction to Philosophy, p. 137.)

ary materialistic theory and encounter all the difficulties which belong to that theory. Aside from furnishing a pretty phrase, the supposed "inner face of matter" is found to render very scant service. It affords no explanation of psychological facts, except as it is elevated to the rank of a distinct subject; and in proportion as this result is approximated there is a virtual abandonment of materialism.

The failure of materialism to give any intelligible account of cognition is aggravated by its inherent fatalism. Where all thinking and all action are under the bonds of an inexorable necessity, it is not only difficult to distinguish between the normal and the abnormal, but to conceive that there is any valid distinction between them. If we suppose a divine mind as the standard of truth, and free beings, who may make a better or worse use of their opportunity, to find out what accords with the supreme reason, there is at least an intelligible ground of distinction between truth and error, whatever difficulty there may be in passing judgment upon this or that item of opinion or belief. In this case, man's fallibility in no wise denies that there is an unchanging standard of truth. But where the supreme power enforces with invincible necessity contradictory opinions and beliefs, what ground is there for conceiving any real standard? If matter acting under invariable laws is the ultimate entity, the determining power back of all events, then the contradictions in human opinion are the contradictions of the supreme power itself. Being thus in the habit of contradicting itself, when shall it be trusted? Shall the democratic principle of the right of the majority to rule determine whether confidence shall be given? This would be a poor makeshift, since there is no intrinsic certainty that a majority is in the right, or that the majority of to-day will not be the minority of to-morrow. Shall it be argued that opinions which persist must be in harmony with the nature of things, since they can persist only by ministering to the survival of those who entertain them, and this survival supposes

the harmony in question? This would be a covert treason against the genuine materialistic theory, which makes all mental facts the purely determined, and allows them no power of reaction whatever upon their physical antecedents. Being thus unable to reach or to modify the physical causes, they are by hypothesis perfectly impotent to have any effect upon the survival of their subjects. The persistence of opinions, therefore, affords, from this point of view, no ground of inference respecting their truth or error. In short, a supreme power, which proves by the fact of necessitating contradictory opinions its capability of enforcing error — if perchance there is any truth or error — affords no secure pledge that it will not regularly necessitate erroneous thinking in this or that line.

In a more direct view, materialistic fatalism is seen to work for mental disruption. It is not merely a humiliation for men to reckon themselves automata, it is practically an impossibility. No doubt, under the pressure of a speculative exigency a man will sign away his title to all free agency; but before the ink is dry the inalienable feeling of freedom within will begin its protest against the assignment. At most, the feeling can be wounded and weakened by the speculative denial of its legitimacy; it cannot be eliminated so long as any vitality remains in the human spirit. Materialistic fatalism, therefore, makes a demand for self-contradiction. It works for inward schism, assailing that which is felt to be most essential to personal dignity and worth. The undermining of intellectual confidence, inward confusion, despair of the truth, is its natural result, so far as it is seriously accepted.

In denying freedom materialism also cancels morality. It may be that it leaves room for an aesthetic distinction between different kinds of conduct. Some necessitated actions may be more agreeable to contemplate than others. A deed of beneficence may be pronounced intrinsically fairer than a deed of mischief or destruction. But morality is not summed up in aesthetics. We apply to the field of conduct other canons

than those by which we estimate a flower-garden. Central to our judgment upon ourselves and upon others are the ideas of merit and demerit, of innocence and guilt, of non-liability and responsibility. To ignore these ideas is to ignore fundamental facts of moral experience and to rob morality of the more significant part of its content. But to rationally found these ideas is impossible save on the presupposition of freedom. The notion of a guilty automaton or responsible mechanism may well be left to the child who, in his foolish passion, kicks the stone over which he has stumbled. Materialistic necessity abolishes all distinction between merit and demerit, and renders the use of the terms inept or mendacious.

In cancelling the proper subject of morality materialism strikes at the efficacy of moral motive. It is not a matter of practical indifference what views are taken of human nature and destiny. A low view tends in the long run to lessen the incentives to noble conduct. Human personality must be seen to be sacred, in order to be secure of being treated as sacred. He who educates himself into the conviction that his fellow-men are only curious automata is, other things being equal, in a poor condition to respect their interests as compared with the one who sees in them the actual or possible children of a heavenly King and heirs of immortal life.

Finally, materialism tends to impoverish the human spirit by denying the proper object of worship. It has no lofty ideal to summon forth reverence, adoration, and affection. The materialist, it is true, may attempt to habilitate nature as a suitable deity, following the example of Strauss, who in his later days concluded that the cosmos should be made the object of worship. But altars reared to such a deity are likely to be scantily furnished with incense. The worshipper, reminding himself that the highest heaven of matter has nothing intrinsically better than the ground upon which he treads, and that nature has no hearing whatever for his praises or petitions, will naturally be tempted to neglect his devotions.

He can have no such perennial incentive to pour out his heart in worship as comes from the thought of the God pictured by psalmist, prophet, and Messiah, — the living God, holy, exalted, and responsive, who grants the light of His countenance to those who seek to know and to do His will.

What was said of materialism in its mystical phase may be regarded as having a certain application to the theory which is styled *monism*. This term has indeed a varied use. An idealistic pantheism may claim that it describes very appropriately its own standpoint. Even a stanch theism, with its insistence upon the thoroughgoing and constant dependence of all finite things upon a supreme agent, may be credited with a species of monistic doctrine. But while the name of monism has no exclusive association with materialism, it is not infrequently used to cover views which are justly suspected of being strongly allied with materialism.

In its least credible form monism identifies the physical and the mental. This seems to have been done by Romanes in the following attempted illustration of the way to overcome the duality of mind and matter, of subject and object. "We have only," he says, "to suppose that the antithesis between mind and motion — subject and object — is itself phenomenal or apparent : not absolute or real. We have only to suppose that the seeming duality is relative to our modes of apprehension ; and, therefore, that any change taking place in the mind, and any corresponding change taking place in the brain, are really not two changes but one change. When a violin is played upon we have a musical sound, and at the same time we see a vibration of the strings. Relatively to our consciousness, therefore, we have two sets of changes, which appear to be very different in kind ; yet we know that in an absolute sense they are one and the same ; we know that the diversity in consciousness is created only by the difference in the modes of our perceiving the same event — whether we see or whether we hear the vibration of the strings. Similarly, we may sup-

pose a vibration of nerve-strings and a process of thought are really one and the same event, which is dual or diverse only in relation to our modes of perceiving it." [1]

The trouble with this illustration is that, so far as it is intelligible, it does not illustrate. The intelligible notion of the facts cited is that the same exterior cause, operating upon the subject through the medium of two different sense-organs, produces two different orders of nerve vibrations, which in the interpretation of the subject become the seen and the heard respectively. The method of the subject's interpretation is of course a mystery; but that the cognition should be dual is intelligible enough, seeing that two distinct orders of events are supposed to be furnished, namely, the two orders of nerve vibrations. There is no identification here of one thing with another. The illustration accordingly fails, as not affording a parallel case. The monistic philosopher should have shown that the vibration itself of the musical string is at the same time something entirely different — say the roundness of a kettle, the transparency of glass, the flight of a bird, or the configuration of a leaf — in order to have given any illustration of a possible identification of a movement of brain substance with a mental fact. That an event under certain conditions should be the source or cause of two others, and that these should give rise to a dual perception in a knowing subject is easy enough to understand. What we want, in order to make credible the monistic theory, as defined here by Romanes, is not an illustration of how one event or change may be the cause of two others, but how the given event or change can rationally be counted identical with something as thoroughly different to our mental view as can be conceived. In spite of the proffered illustration, it seems to us that we

[1] Mind, Motion, and Monism, pp. 27, 28. It should be observed that we are concerned here only with the success of the illustration offered in behalf of the given statement of the monistic theory. The question whether the distinguished writer remained consistently by this statement lies outside of our consideration.

should need two minds working in indescribably different ways in order to be able to contemplate one and the same event as a nerve vibration and a thought.

More commonly, monism avoids an unintelligible identification of the physical and the mental, and contents itself with asserting that both are phenomenal, different forms of manifestation of fundamental being. In this case we have repeated the same difficulties as were noted respecting the attainment of a consistent view of the interrelation of the two faces of the double-faced matter considered above. Moreover, it is to be remembered that phenomena cannot well be phenomena simply to themselves. They are such only to a thinking subject. Appearances without any subject to appear to are as good as iron made of wood. Nor will it do to posit simply an infinite subject. We can give no proper account of our own thoughts save as we regard them as the acts of thinking subjects. The speculator who assumes to divorce thought from a subject, or real self, sooner or later hypostasizes thought itself, or turns it into a real subject. As was illustrated in the case of Herbert Spencer, the expelled ego is bound to get back, and to receive a surreptitious if not an open acknowledgment. It is only an artificial alienation from its own point of view, an unnatural transference of itself to an objective range, which permits the thinking subject to question its own substantial agency and to rate itself alongside the physical as simply phenomenal.[1]

On the general merits of the monistic theory the following from Professor Ladd is pertinent: "Monism is the most wasteful possible form of metaphysical theory for the relation between body and mind. Body we know and mind we know; and if we are compelled to assume any real being to furnish a metaphysical ground for the phenomena, then we can afford one kind of being for each kind of phenomena. But this third

[1] See Bowne, Metaphysics, revised edition, pp. 314 ff.

unknown and unknowable sort of being, what does *it* here? If the phenomena are not so incomparable that they cannot properly be referred to one reality as its manifestation, then our choice lies between the so-called body and the so-called mind; and thus materialism and spiritualism must fight it out between themselves. Monism has no standing as a third metaphysical theory. But if the incomparable character of the two sets of phenomena forbids either the materialistic or the spiritualistic hypothesis, then the dualistic hypothesis would seem for the time to hold the field. Monism again, however, has then no *raison d'être* as a rival metaphysical theory."[1]

VI. — Criticism of Pantheism.

The objections to materialism are in large part valid against pantheism. The psychology of the latter may not be cumbered with all the difficulties which burden the former. But it is vitiated by the same unmitigated necessitarianism. Spinoza was outspoken in the denial that there is any real freedom or self-determination in the universe. Herein he voiced the customary thought of strict pantheists. It is contrary to their fundamental interest to admit the fact of freedom. They cannot concede it to the infinite, for they deny its personality. They cannot concede it to finite spirits, for unity of being is their shibboleth. To make finite spirits anything more than the modes of the activity of the infinite, to grant them such independence as is implied in a power of self-determination, would threaten to cancel strict unity, and to replace the one unfolding infinite with an irreducible aggregate. A necessitated evolution is therefore as characteristic of pantheism as of materialism. In its theory of cognition

[1] Philosophy of Mind, pp. 345, 346.

and in its ethics it is subject to all the embarrassments which are properly associated with materialistic fatalism.

In so far as it emphasizes the divine immanence, pantheism promises a satisfaction to religious needs. Its service in this direction, however, is mostly illusory. The thought that God is in all things becomes barren of religious incentive and consolation when it is remembered that this presence is only the presence of impersonal power and affords no possible ground of real fellowship. As has been aptly remarked by Flint: "If the God who is in the sunbeam can only be present as its light and heat, the sunbeam without God must be equivalent to the sunbeam with God. If He is even only so present in ourselves that there is no distinction between Him and us, between His power and our power, His presence with us is not distinguishable from His absence from us. Another sort of presence is needed before the soul can be satisfied,—the presence of one spirit with another spirit."[1]

In another respect also pantheism is adverse to religion. It degrades the object of worship It brings God under the limitations of a mundane process, ever going on, but never completed. It makes Him as truly identified with the evil and the vile in the universe as with the good and the noble. It places Him in a very important respect below the plane of His creatures, since it represents Him as never able to attain to any proper self-knowledge.

That the worshipper should thus have the advantage over the worshipped certainly makes a stumbling-block for the religious feelings. It is likewise somewhat of a riddle for the

[1] Anti-Theistic Theories, pp. 385-386. Professor Howison enforces a like consideration, when, after granting to the mystics the merit of bringing God near to us, he adds: "But nearness may become *too* near. When it is made to mean absolute identity, then all the worth of true nearness is gone, — the openness of access, the freedom of converse, the joy of true reciprocity. These precious things all draw their meaning from the *distinct* reality of ourselves and Him who is really other than we." (The Conception of God. By Royce, Le Conte, Howison, and Mezes, p. 112.)

understanding. To derive the superior from the inferior, the knowing from the unconscious, resembles too closely the evolution of something out of nothing. In view of the necessities of his own system the pantheist would do well to repress his abhorrence of the notion of creation. That an infinite person should produce that which is within or beneath the plane of his own attributes is quite as conceivable, to say the least, as that an impersonal power should transcend its own attributes by producing self-conscious beings.

Doubtless in pantheistic thinking the stress may be variously located. One form emphasizes the notion that God is simply the immanent ground of the world. In another form the stress is upon the sole reality of God as against the world. This acosmistic pantheism might concede to God a kind of conscious selfhood, but it provides no real standing-ground for men as moral and religious personalities, since it requires them to reckon their individual being as but part and parcel of a sphere of illusion.

VII. — Consideration of the Extent to which Theistic Faith Depends upon Formal Argumentation.

As we come to the positive theistic argument, it will not be amiss to guard against certain errors respecting its function. It would be rating the practical worth of the argument much too high to suppose that it affords the whole ground or incentive to theistic belief. Constitutional impulse is prior to syllogisms. The needs of the emotional, the æsthetic, and the moral nature stimulate to thought, and unite with intellectual needs to beget and to keep alive the idea of a supernatural and overruling power. The history of the race pays too large tribute to the force, persistency, and universality of this idea to allow the supposition of its adventitious origin. In one form or another it seems to be the possession of every tribe of men

on the face of the earth. Supposed instances of its absence have repeatedly failed to endure close scrutiny. It has been found that the religion of the savage has been disguised by the poverty and strangeness of his dialect, or hidden by his suspicion and reticence. As has been remarked by an investigator of the subject, "Even with much time, and care, and knowledge of language, it is not always easy to elicit from savages the details of their theology. They try to hide from the prying and contemptuous foreigner their worship of gods, who seem to shrink, like their worshippers, before the white man and his mightier Deity." [1] But even if a genuine instance of the complete lack of religion should be found among deeply debased men, it would prove little or nothing against the constitutional basis of the religious impulse. As springing from an abnormal degradation, a sinking below the plane of true manhood, it would not be an index of man's real nature any more than an instance of complete apathy towards the beautiful would be such an index. The witness of history, therefore, is substantially unqualified as to man's native religiousness, or bent to recognize a supernatural power. A lively impression of natural objects has doubtless had much to do with shaping the specific direction of this bent. But natural objects would have remained simply objects of sense, had it not been for the working of religious needs and impulses. Only the powerful stimulus coming from this source could create and sustain the disposition to translate objects of sense into symbols and vehicles of the supernatural. Possibly, as has been alleged, dreams and apparitions may have had something to do in fostering belief in spirits. This belief, however, would never have been the basis for a persistent conviction of vital connection with and obligation toward an intangible power, but for needs and tendencies imbedded in the nature of men. The particular direction of a current is one thing; the perennial source

[1] E. B. Tylor, Primitive Culture, I. 382.

of the current is quite another thing. The manifestation of religion may have been shaped by various causes. The power urging to manifestation, so universally and persistently, cannot reasonably be regarded as anything less than inborn needs and tendencies of the human spirit. The function of formal argumentation, therefore, can only be supplementary. The basis of theistic faith is always at hand before philosophy or theology begins to set its proofs in order.

It would also be an overvaluation of theistic argumentation to suppose that it is competent, in the strict sense of the term, to demonstrate the existence of a divine person. Demonstration proper belongs to the sphere of ideal quantities and relations, where the data are thus and so by hypothesis, and no account needs to be taken of any uncertainties and imperfections of observation or experience. It cannot, therefore, apply to the sphere of objective reality. In this domain an overwhelming preponderance of grounds in favor of a particular conclusion is the most that can be attained. This suffices for practical needs, and speculation becomes intemperate when it asks for more, whether in physical science or in theology.

On the other side, well-ordered proofs of the divine existence are not to be disparaged as illegitimate or useless. Though faith may not have been wholly or mainly indebted to them for its origin, it may be confirmed by them and put in position to withstand the attacks of a subtle scepticism. Moreover, faith in its more spontaneous forms is not well-guarded against aberrations. A vivid conviction of the reality of the supernatural does not necessarily imply an unblemished or adequate view of the character of the supernatural. That is a subject which calls for the critical use of reason. No one would think of denying this in the face of the vast crowd of misconceptions which have shadowed and mutilated man's thought of God. But a critical use of reason to determine the nature of God implies logically a critical canvassing, in

large part, of the grounds which legitimate belief in His existence. No strict line of division can be drawn between the two fields. That which truly reveals to reason the existence of God must at the same time be a disclosure in some degree of His attributes. So long, then, as one allows the propriety of using reason to clarify the vision of the divine attributes, he contends for little else than a point of arrangement and nomenclature when he would rule out proofs of the divine existence as needless or impertinent.

VIII. — The Cosmological Argument.

Among the standard arguments for the divine existence, the cosmological comes first in the natural order. If it does not reach the goal of proof, it is still very serviceable in providing a suitable basis for the completing arguments.

In the cosmological argument the world is regarded in its general aspect as a theatre of contingent existence. It is assumed as a self-evident truth, that things which had a beginning must have been caused. The process of the argument, as it is usually put, is to go back from the beginnings or changes in the world to that by which they must be supposed to have been originated.

It is commonly agreed that the world, so far as it comes within the sphere of observation, contains indubitable marks of being an effect or sum of effects. The advance of science continually emphasizes the fact that everything visible and tangible has had a history. The primitive or ultimate is nowhere discoverable. Rocks, mountains, and continents are found to catalogue innumerable changes, and the globe itself seems to have scarcely more claim to the attributes of eternity and unchangeability than the gourd of Jonah, which grew up in a night and withered in a day. Now the mind cannot rest upon universal contingency. Tracing back the chain of causa-

tion from one link to another it must sooner or later ask for an ultimate ground or cause. If it be said that it is not authorized to make this demand, and should content itself with the supposition of an endless chain of causes, the reply is that the mind does not and cannot content itself with that supposition. By virtue of its constitution it rejects an everlasting interrogation as to what next, while tracing back the dependent. It is forced to believe that the efficiency which runs down through a series of causes could not have come from nowhere and nothing. To impute self-sufficiency to the series, while each of the members is confessedly dependent, is seen to be an implicit denial of the principle of causality. The mind, therefore, in fulfillment of a rational demand, springs to the thought of a real source of efficiency in a self-sufficient being or first cause.

But, it may be inquired, cannot the world itself, in its totality, be taken as the self-sufficient being or source of efficiency? Instead of running back the series of causes in a straight line, may we not suppose them to be arranged, so to speak, in circles? In other and less figurative words, may not the world be viewed as an aggregate of interacting members, and all the changes which take place within it be imputed to the mutual relations or interplay of the parts?

Undoubtedly, the world is a system of interacting members. This is the common assumption underlying scientific investigation. But the very fact that the world is a system of interacting members compels us to look beyond the mere sum of the parts and to seek for an adequate bond of unity. Each part is conditioned by its relation to the rest. Independence or self-sufficiency is not found in any part. Therefore it is not found in any number of parts, since the mere addition of the dependent cannot bring about the independent. Consequently it is not found in the sum of the parts. In truth, this sum is only a mental representation and can have no efficiency whatever. Starting with the notion of interacting or

dependent members, we cannot reach a satisfactory view of unity, unless we resort to a completing notion, and assume that back of the members there is a unitary being which coördinates them, and is the independent ground of their dependent existence. "An interacting many," says Bowne, "cannot exist without a coördinating one. The interaction of our thoughts and other mental states is possible only through the unity of a basal reality which brings them together in the unity of one consciousness. So the interactions of the universe are possible only through the unity of a basal reality which brings them together in its one immanent omnipresence."[1]

Thus, as the chain of causes required for its interpretation the notion of a first cause, so the thought of a world-system requires for its completion the predication of a unitary ground of the world.

The unitary power which sways the components of the world, so as to form them into one great system, may rationally be regarded as the source of their being, as well as of their relations. The relations of the components are conditioned on their qualities. Consequently, no power save that which ordains the qualities can have full sovereignty over the relations. But ordaining the qualities of the components means nothing less than originating their being. Indeed, to predicate any sovereignty at all over the independent seems to be a contradiction in terms. If we start with independent being we can never find any speculative warrant for regarding it as otherwise than independent, or above all necessitated relations. In any case, we are authorized by the law of parsimony to reject a needless duality. In the absence of a positive disproof of the origination of the material elements of the world, it would be a trespass against the philosophical demand for unity to assume for them an underived being.

[1] Metaphysics, first edition, p. 126. Compare Ulrici, Gott und die Natur, pp. 483–486.

This is the outcome of the cosmological argument. As necessitating the assumption of an ultimate and unitary ground of the world it excludes polytheism in the sense of a plurality of independent beings. In relation to pantheism, it has a less decisive advantage. So far as supplying the necessary basis of the dependent members of the system is concerned, the unitary ground may be regarded as simply immanent, in other words, may be understood in a pantheistic sense. In order, therefore, to establish the theistic conception it will be necessary to pass on to other arguments.

IX. — The Teleological or Design Argument.

The ability to select and to pursue ends can rationally be predicated only of an intelligent, self-conscious, and free being. Intelligence is required for the conception of an end, and as no supposable thing can be an end, save as it is brought into known relation to the subject which conceives it, self-consciousness is seen to be implicated in the notion of an end. Freedom is equally implicated, since anything can become an end only by being appropriated or chosen. Verbally, of course, ends or designs may be conjoined with the unconscious or non-intelligent. But there is no thought corresponding to the verbal collocation. Unconscious design equals undesigned design, and unconscious intelligence equals non-intelligent intelligence. The adjective cancels the meaning of the noun.

A proof then that nature reveals the choice and pursuit of ends would be a proof that an intelligent, self-conscious, and free being is back of nature. In other words, the teleological or design argument, if it is properly sustained by facts, takes us beyond the simple conception of a unitary ground of the world and enforces upon us the idea of a Divine Person.

As regards the validity of the argument, spontaneous conviction is certainly on its side. While nature may contain not a little that seems arbitrary, not to say fortuitous, it conveys on the whole an overwhelming impression of regnant purpose. Throughout the general range of the organic world there is as clear an adaptation of means to ends as can be found in any works of human art. In the vast compass of the inorganic world there is an exactness of relation between part and part that surpasses the most delicate adjustments of human machinery. Mathematical relations are everywhere observed. The atoms attract in fixed ratios for given distances. The elements combine in fixed ratios. The masses are whirled through space in well-defined curves, and give in the aggregate an amazing spectacle of harmonious movement. The purpose of many of the particular arrangements of the inorganic world may not be clear. But the general outcome — the harmony, the regularity, and the stability — is seen to be admirably adapted to the needs of sensitive and rational being. In short, enigmatic instances might be much more numerous than they are, and still nature be able to afford an ample witness to a designing intelligence. John Stuart Mill says the least that the facts call for when he remarks: "I think it must be allowed that, in the present state of our knowledge, the adaptations in nature afford a large balance in favor of creation by intelligence." [1]

The deification of chance by erecting it into the author of nature is too wild a species of idolatry to call for more than a word of comment. Those who urge that the world might have arisen by the fortuitous concourse of atoms, just as the Iliad might conceivably be produced by the casting forth of letters, need no other answer than the challenge to produce a page of the Iliad by throwing down handfuls of letters from a promiscuous heap. All eternity may safely be given them

[1] Essay on Theism.

for a trial. To suppose that countless factors should come out of chaos into harmonious adjustment by mere chance, is the height of insane credulity. Some, who would shun an open appeal to chance as the great world-maker, seek to evade the force of the design argument by makeshifts scarcely less whimsical. Thus an attempt is made to crowd out the notion of final cause, or design, by that of efficient cause. In relation to the eye, for example, it is said, the proper inference is that it is a cause of sight, not that it was made for the purpose of seeing. And so of any organ, the use to which it is put is to be regarded simply as the result of the existence of the organ, and not the existence of the organ as brought about for the sake of the use. But this is arbitrary assertion. Theoretically, there is no incompatibility between efficient and final cause. Both may be implied in any namable arrangement. Indeed final cause always supposes efficient causes as its ministers or agents. To allow that seeing is caused by the eye does not imply that the eye was not made for seeing, any more than the fact that light is caused by an ignited candle implies that the candle was not made for the purpose of giving light. The appeal, in short, to efficient as against final cause means simply that we must ask for no explanations, but turn everything over to an opaque necessity. This may answer for those who are ready to pronounce themselves mere automata; but beings who believe themselves capable of self-directing purpose may consistently look for marks of purposeful action in nature.

Again, it is objected that design in nature is beyond the reach of our inspection. The most that we are competent to affirm is that things appear as if they were designed for special uses. But why is not the appearance, in the absence of insuperable objections, a sufficient ground for affirming design? There are no conclusions in natural science that can claim any better foundation. The best of them are inductions from the appearances of things. With respect to our fellow-

men, also, we have to base our inferences upon appearances. We have no direct vision of design in their case, and we judge them to be ruled by purpose simply because they act as if they were. So design is properly inferred in connection with the manifold arrangements of nature because they appear just as if they had been dictated by intelligent purpose. If it be pleaded that our finite minds are too circumscribed to pass any judgment on the designs of the Infinite, it must be answered that this anti-theological modesty is overstrained. The designs of the Infinite, in their full reach, are indeed too wide and high for our grasp. But as we are not excluded from the field of scientific induction because we cannot draw our scant line around the universe, no more are we excluded from philosophical or theological induction because we cannot perfectly comprehend the Infinite. If the Infinite is the cause of nature, then it is manifested to a greater or less extent in nature, and nothing can be more legitimate than to search out and to express the import of that manifestation. To ignore marks of purposeful action in that which is revealed, because much lies back of the revealed, would be like refusing to make use of the light of day because, forsooth, there may be a vast stretch of dark regions in space.

Another expedient for evading the design argument consists in an appeal to law and time. It seems to be imagined that law, if only it is given sufficient time to work, is competent to build up the most complex and finished universe. But the obvious truth is that law is not an agent at all, and has no power to work out anything. The only agents are beings. Law is but a name for the method of their action and interaction. It cannot therefore be in the least degree opposed to the supposition of design. The methods in question may themselves express design ; and also there may be reasons for inferring preëstablished conditions upon which the permanent methods of nature were superinduced. As for time, it ought not to be necessary to say that it has no efficiency of any sort.

A thousand years have no more of creative potency than one moment. So far as efficiency is concerned, it is a case of zero multiplied by zero when law is conjoined with time. What is immanent in already existing being may be evolved according to law through long stretches of time. But the outcome cannot be made by law or time to exceed the immanent content. Whatever of intelligent purpose is expressed in the outcome must have dominated the development from the beginning.

It may be granted that the supposition that organic forms were gradually evolved through long ages by natural selection, or some equivalent method, brings purely physical agents prominently into view as the proximate causes of special adaptations in the organic world, and abridges the distinction between it and the inorganic world in this respect. But even on the ground of this supposition there is plenty of room to predicate design in the marvellous coördination of physical causes. As Romanes has remarked: "Although this and that particular adjustment in nature may be seen to be proximately due to physical causes, and although we are prepared on the grounds of the largest possible analogy to infer that all other such particular cases are likewise due to physical causes, the more ultimate question arises, How is it that all physical causes conspire, by their united action, to the production of a general order of nature? It is against all analogy to suppose that such an end as this can be accomplished by such means as those, in the way of mere chance or the fortuitous concourse of atoms. We are led by the most fundamental dictates of our reason to conclude that there must be some cause for this coöperation of causes."[1] It only needs to be added that if

[1] Reprinted from the *Nineteenth Century* in Thoughts on Religion, by the late George John Romanes, edited by Charles Gore, 1895. The reasoning of Otto Pfleiderer may be compared. Having premised that organisms, such as appear in living and conscious beings, cannot result from a mere compounding of parts, since the parts have their function only in subordination to the idea of the whole,

there is any reason for not understanding this cause of causes in a theistic sense, it is not to be found in evolutionary science.[1]

Once more, appeals have been made to the phenomena of instinct as indicating that a blindly working power may vie in achievement with intelligent purpose, and that accordingly the latter may be dispensed with in our interpretation of nature. But it is to be observed that instinct is discoverable only in connection with organisms, and that no reason is apparent for regarding it as anything else than a resultant of the animal constitution. That it is able to mimic so marvellously the work of intelligence may suggest unspeakable skill in the power which fashioned and adjusted the physical and psychical constitution of animals. But why should it suggest the competency of matter, or blind force, to do the work of intelligent purpose? Make instinct instrumental, place intelligence back of it, and you have an adequate hypothesis to account for its working. Place the non-intelligent back of it, and you have an enigma. The appeal to instinct, in truth, like that to efficient causes, is a way of negativing inquiry after a real explanation, a virtual injunction to rest upon an opaque necessity.

The argument in general enforces the conclusion that choice lies between explaining nature by reference to a supreme intelligence and taking refuge in an opaque necessity. If it

he adds this weighty statement: "Now as the world incessantly produces organic, sentient, and conscious life, and that not fortuitously but with a manifest tendency, a striving of its whole process of becoming, to this production, the cause of the world must be conceived as answering to this effect, not therefore as dead matter or blind force, but as purposeful reason, and as will realizing a purpose, or as the omnipotent reason which we call God." Philosophy of Religion, III. 262, 263.

[1] It may be noticed that Darwin, though at one time he expressed the belief that natural selection excludes design, was inclined in his later years to predicate designed laws which govern the general disposition of things without excluding fortuitous elements in the details. In 1864, Professor Kölliker, an opponent of design, accused Darwin of having become "in the fullest sense of the word a teleologist."

be alleged that such an intelligence is as remote from explanation as nature on any supposition can be, we are content to reply that in making a supreme mind the ultimate mystery we effect a reasonable choice, since that, besides explaining nature, is alone consonant with the deepest facts and needs of the human spirit.[1]

This thought opens the way to our next argument. But we must pause for a moment to notice the curious allegation that evidences of design are indications of the limitation of the Creator. Design, says John Stuart Mill, implies contrivance or adaptation of means to ends, and so is contradictory to the supposition of omnipotence, since an omnipotent being cannot be in need of means for accomplishing His ends. The argument overlooks the consideration that in an intelligible system things must exist in relations, and that the means are very largely implied by the ends, so that the latter cannot be realized apart from the former. Omnipotence cannot provide for righteousness in the world without first creating moral beings, or for happiness without the presence of sensitive beings, or for family life without the union of the sexes, or for the discipline of individuals and communities without a determinate scheme of laws, chastisements, and rewards, or for an ideal kingdom without subjects well established in holy character by a right use of freedom. Speed or directness in reaching a given end is not the only thing to be regarded in a cosmos. Respect must be had, also, to consistency, or the harmonious relation of part with part. The fact, then, that means are employed is no token that the end is difficult to the Creator. We are free to suppose that every means that is chosen is subordinate to the total end to be realized, so that that end could not be realized in its full extent without it, or at least without some equivalent.

[1] "It is always by accepting one mystery that we make many mysteries plain. Reason, insight, lies just here in accepting ultimates wisely." (John Bascom, The New Theology, p. 87.)

X. — The Argument from Human Nature.

Adaptations within the higher range of man's being which look toward individual perfection, or toward the lofty ideal of a kingdom of righteousness, might properly be considered under the teleological argument. But the evidence which comes from this point of view may also be conveniently included in the *argument from human nature*. In the preceding discussion, especially in the criticism of anti-theistic theories, we have anticipated the main points of this argument, and therefore need here to repeat scarcely more than a summary of them.

Each cardinal distinction of human nature demands faith in a Divine Person, and, apart from that reference, cannot be satisfactorily explained. Is man gifted with intelligence? The supposition of a Divine Person points to an adequate fountain of that intelligence, whereas, if the fundamental reality of the universe is viewed as non-intelligent, no sufficient cause for the rise of intelligence can be conceived. Emptiness might as rationally be made the source of fullness as the non-intelligent of the intelligent. The psychology which attempts to deduce thought from jarring atoms can always be convicted of inconsequent reasoning. Is man endowed with an inalienable conviction of his freedom? Necessity cannot be supposed to contradict itself by creating the free. To legitimate the sense of freedom, and to lift it above the category of mockery and illusion, the thought is needed of a self-determining Being at the head of the universe, who both knows His own freedom and is able to create in its likeness. Is man conscious that he is a subject of moral obligation? This means that a law is set over his will, a categorical imperative as Kant phrased it,[1] which was not enthroned by any election of the individual, or

[1] The formula of the law as given by Kant reads thus: "So act that the maxim of thy will can always at the same time hold good as a principle of universal legislation." (Critik der practischen Vernunft, Buch I., Theil I., § 7.)

by any vote of his fellows, since personal inclination cannot abolish it, and it will not abdicate at the call of majorities. It is true that the detailed application of the sense of obligation may depend largely upon the judgment of the individual, and this judgment may be influenced by the sentiments of the community. But the sense of obligation itself, the conviction that there is a right and a wrong, and that the former is a law for all conduct, is not accidental. It is so indubitably constitutional that the person in whom it should not appear with the unfolding of intelligence would, by common consent, be reckoned inhuman and monstrous. Whence came this universal feeling of subjection to moral law? If there is a holy will above the skies, it is adequately explained as the imprint of the Lawgiver, who, in fashioning men, designed them to be the subjects of a kingdom of righteousness. On the other hand, if the thought of God be excluded, no satisfactory explanation can be given. To deduce the moral from the non-moral involves the same violence to the maxim of sufficient cause as the derivation of the intelligent from the non-intelligent. Is man proved by his history to be a religious being? Then his nature finds its perfect complement in the conception of a Being who, as personal, promises communion, and as perfect invites to adoring contemplation. Is the æsthetic sense accessory to religion and an avenue of refined enjoyment? Faith in God affords assurance that the "soul of loveliness" shall never vanish out of the system of things, since beauty is linked with absolute being, and may flow forth forever without expending its fullness. Does the whole nature of man — intellectual, moral, religious, and æsthetic — demand for its satisfaction the thought of an everlasting kingdom of righteousness? God is the necessary presupposition of such a kingdom, its founder, conserver, and bond of unity.

But, it has been urged, this way of arguing is anthropomorphic. It arbitrarily erects man into a measure of reality, and assumes that there must be a counterpart to his attributes.

Herbert Spencer has thus objected to this method: "If we make the grotesque supposition that the ticking and other movements of a watch constituted a kind of consciousness, and that a watch possessed of such a consciousness insisted on regarding the watchmaker's action as determined, like its own, by springs and escapements, we should simply complete a parallel of which religious teachers think much. And were we to suppose that a watch not only formulated the cause of its existence in these mechanical terms, but held that watches were bound out of reverence so to formulate this cause, and even vituperated as atheistic watches any that did not venture so to formulate, we should merely illustrate the presumption of theologians by carrying their own argument a step further."[1] To this Samuel Harris well replies: "The objection rests on the absurdity that if a watch should become endowed with reason, it would still remain a mere machine, just as it was before, and therefore would see nothing in itself but mechanism, and could ascribe nothing but mechanism to its maker. But if a watch were endowed with reason it would no longer be a mere machine, but a rational person. Then contemplating its own mechanism it would infer, precisely as a rational man does in contemplating it, that it had a maker like itself in intelligence, but not necessarily like itself in mechanism. And should this intelligent watch ridicule all intelligent watches that believe they were made by an intelligent maker, it would be like Mr. Spencer ridiculing intelligent men for believing their Creator to be an intelligent being."[2]

A crude anthropomorphism deserves no apology. But it would take some better evidence than the ticking of a hypothetical watch to show that it is illegitimate to represent the fundamental reality as congruous with what is loftiest in the nature, experience, and conception of man. It is certainly

[1] First Principles of a New Philosophy, pp. 110, 111.

[2] The Self-Revelation of God, pp. 434, 435. Compare Bowne's Review of Herbert Spencer, pp. 74, 75.

quite as philosophical and quite as honoring to the fundamental reality to think of it anthropomorphically in this sense, as to think of it in an earthy or nihilistic manner. The alternative of not thinking at all is inapplicable wherever there is living intellect.

XI. — An Alleged Deficiency in the Foregoing Arguments.

It will perhaps be suggested that the arguments presented do not yet reach the proper goal, since they prove only the existence of an adequate cause of the world (including man in his intellectual and moral nature), but the world as known to us is finite, and no finite effect necessarily implies an infinite cause.

The objection may be formally valid, but it is practically insignificant. Any one who acknowledges an intelligent author of the world will never be subject to any painful anxiety as respects His infinitude. The creature universe is so vast that the imagination faints before the task of picturing its immensity. There is nothing too in the way of the faith that the power which was able to make the known world could make another world, or any number of other worlds, of equal magnitude. Indeed, our own experience of intelligence and will as not being exhausted in their products, naturally directs us to the inference that the supreme will and intelligence abide in inexhaustible fulness, beyond all the accomplished work of creation. We cannot, without violence to our spontaneous conviction, withhold the conclusion that there is no conceivable outpost which the power of the Creator may not transcend.

In reaching this view, however, we have come to as positive a notion of the infinite as we are able to form. If God is the source of all actual being, and there is also in Him an

unlimited possibility of being, He realizes truly the notion of the Infinite One.

If it be still insisted that it is only natural, not strictly necessary, to infer infinitude, the answer must be: An ideal against which no objection can be urged, which always springs into view with the advance of intelligence and is intrinsically agreeable to the human mind, rightly demands acceptance.

XII. — Criticism of Some Inconclusive Arguments.

It will be noticed that no account has been taken of the so-called ontological argument. The reason of the omission is the conviction that this argument fails to accomplish what it professes. It affords no real demonstration, and all the truth which lies at its basis has already received due credit in the specification of the cogency with which the idea of the infinite or perfect takes hold of human intelligence. As Lotze puts the subject: "Not out of the perfection of the Perfect as a logical consequence is His real existence inferred, but without the circumlocution of a deduction the impossibility of His non-existence is immediately felt." [1]

As is intimated in the foregoing, the ontological argument assumes to prove the existence of God from the idea of God. Its distinct formulation was first given by Anselm. We are to define God, he says, as the greatest that can be conceived. Even the fool who denies in his heart that there is a God can take this definition into his understanding. So he can be convinced that the greatest that can be thought is in the understanding (*in intellectu*). But the greatest that can be thought cannot be in the understanding alone, since to be in reality (*in re*), as well as in the understanding, or mental conception, is greater than to be in the latter alone. "There undoubtedly

[1] Mikrokosmos, IX, 4.

exists therefore something, than which a greater cannot be thought, both in the understanding and in reality."[1] Descartes reproduced essentially the same argument. As the mind, he says, from seeing that the idea of a triangle involves the equality of its three angles to two right angles, undoubtingly concludes that the three angles of a triangle are in fact equal to two right angles, "so, from its perceiving necessary and eternal existence to be comprised in the idea which it has of an all-perfect Being, it ought to conclude that this all-perfect Being exists."[2]

What the reasoning of Anselm or Descartes really amounts to is an illustration of the truth that the complete and consistent idea of a perfect being must include among other things the notion of necessary or real existence. But the argument is as far from proving the real existence of such a being as the idea of real existence is from identity with real existence. In other words, the greatest conceivable being is hypothetical in the definition; otherwise there is no excuse for the form of an argument. The argument, therefore, as merely analyzing the hypothetical, cannot deduce the real, since analysis never legitimately draws out anything which was not before included. The self-consistent hypothesis, or idea of the perfect, must first be joined with some reality before it can in any wise evidence the real. Join it with the historical fact that it is an idea to which the intellect and heart of man most profoundly respond, and it becomes at once supported by all our confidence in our mental and moral constitution. But, in taking this step, we have departed from the ontological argument; we are now depending on a historical datum, rather than on the demonstrative virtue of a mere idea.[3]

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[1] Proslog. II. [2] The Principles of Philosophy, Part I.

[3] Compare the remark of Andrew Seth: "There is no evolution possible of a fact from a conception. The existence of God must either be an immediate certainty, or it must be involved in facts of experience which do possess that certainty." (Hegelianism and Personality, p. 119.)

Besides reproducing the proper ontological argument, Descartes reasoned that the idea of God is such that its presence in the mind cannot be explained except on the supposition of an author possessing infinite perfections. "Though the idea of substance," he says, "be in my mind owing to this, that I myself am a substance, I should not, however, have the idea of an infinite substance, seeing I am a finite being, unless it were given me by some substance in reality infinite. And I must not imagine that I do not apprehend the infinite by a true idea, but only by the negation of the finite, in the same way that I comprehend repose and darkness by the negation of motion and light: since, on the contrary, I clearly perceive that there is more reality in the infinite substance than in the finite." [1]

The underlying assumption in this argument seems not to be well taken. While the vitality of the idea of God, or its power over the human spirit, makes credible the supposition that it is in fact divinely fostered, there is no good reason to suppose that the mere fashioning of the idea is beyond the capability of a finite mind. It may be true that finite and infinite must be taken in mutual opposition in order that either should be properly understood. But it is entirely conceivable that the mind should initiate observation and comparison without a formal recognition of either. It can take note in the first place of a given magnitude. Then observing a second magnitude, it can pronounce it greater than the first. Of a third magnitude, it can pronounce that it is greater than the second; and so on towards the limits of observation. In carrying forward this process of comparison, the mind, it is true, so long as it keeps strictly to the process, will not get beyond the relative. But who will say that the mind, after having pronounced one thing greater than another in succession, cannot, sooner or later, raise the inquiry whether there is not some-

[1] Meditation III.

thing so great that no greater can be supposed? If, in virtue of its own endowments, it can make this inquiry, Descartes' argument is invalid, since in making the inquiry it has grasped the notion of the infinite, and with that has also provided for a proper definition of the finite. Now, it seems to us a very poverty-stricken notion of the mind which would deny its competency to make the specified inquiry. It uses data for suggestion as well as for strict logical procedure. Invention often takes place in this manner. Why may not the method of suggestion apply on the subject of the divine existence? Surely it is not at all extravagant to believe that the mind can spring from the last member, which has been noted in an ascending rank of greatness, to the thought of the unqualifiedly great, or the infinite; just as it can complete its representation of a chain of conditioned causes with the thought of an ultimate cause.

The theory that God is known by direct intuition must also be reckoned among views that lack a solid basis; at least, if these terms be taken strictly, and be made to mean more than the fact that the traits of man's intellectual and emotional nature lead naturally, and almost of necessity, to the recognition of a Divine Being. If the intuition (or direct mental vision) is regarded as common to men, it ought to have secured a much more uniform conception of the divine nature than is found to have actually existed. If the intuition is allowed to be exceptional, an explanation of its limited presence may reasonably be asked for. Moreover, there is a certain intrinsic difficulty in conceiving of such an intuition. A limited mind, though it undoubtedly has the thought of the infinite, cannot be regarded as competent actually to see the infinite. An intuition of God in His infinitude is therefore excluded. But if the intuition is not of God in His infinitude, it is of something less than God. This lesser something may, indeed, partially reveal God by way of token or suggestion; but it cannot be anything more than a limited theophany presented

to the inner vision. Such a theophany, as well as any other partial disclosure, would need to be supplemented by rational inference; and the question could be raised whether it would be a surer ground of inference than that which is provided in nature and in the moral constitution of man. It would, in any case, need to be well coördinated with a system of objective reality before assurance could be given that it was due to anything more than a peculiar subjective affection.

Laying aside, then, doubtful proofs, we may sum up the tenor of the discussion in the conclusion, that faith in the existence of an Infinite Person is justified by the compatability of personality with infinitude, rightly understood, by the unsatisfactory and ruinous outcome of anti-theistic theories, and by the validity of the cosmological and teleological arguments, as also of that from human nature.

CHAPTER III.

REVELATION.

I. — Possibility and Probability of Special Revelations in View of the Existence of a Personal God.

The idea of revelation is provided for in the existence of a Supreme Person. As was noticed in the preceding chapter, it best suits simplicity and consistency of thinking to make nature dependent upon God for its being as well as for its order. In this view, as being through and through an effect of divine agency, it manifests God in so far as it has any distinct significance for the human mind.

As Supreme Person, however, God is not merely back of nature, but over it and free to act upon it, or within it, as may suit His pleasure. That is, upon the stated manifestation of Himself in nature He may superinduce special manifestations of His attributes and purposes. If He never acts in this way it cannot be from lack of ability, but only from lack of occasion. To assume the contrary is to deny to Him that self-determination which is essential to the proper notion of personality. As regards possible occasions for special manifestations, there can be little motive to enter a denial, except in pursuance of the theory that nature is an end in itself, or that it is an entirely adequate means for compassing all the ends which God contemplates in connection with the creature universe. But what warrant is there for either assumption? Impersonal nature has no worth to itself, and

consequently can have no worth at all, except as it is subordinated to the good of beings characterized by feeling and intelligence. An eternal kingdom of righteousness is most fitly regarded as the crown of the divine intention in the creation. The race is in training for that kingdom. In proportion to the supreme worth of the kingdom the exigencies of this training must become matters of the profoundest concern in the divine administration. That the ordered course of nature is competent to meet all such exigencies is by no means self-evident. While man's limitations put him in need of spiritual education, his sin makes him a difficult subject to educate properly. Divine tuition must contend against apathy, perversity, and blindness. The abnormal condition of the subject of the tuition makes a demand for special remedial agency. His attention and interest, his ambition and aspiration, must be elicited by something more awakening than the every-day appearance of things. In fine, a single glance at the tragedy of human sin and folly ought to dissipate the fiction that nature affords an adequate revelation for man in his actual condition. It may be indeed sufficient to involve a measure of responsibility, but it is not sufficient to supply the highest motive-power or the most efficient guidance.

The objection that the doctrine of special revelation is disparaging to the wisdom of God, inasmuch as it represents Him as mending and supplementing His work, has no solidity. Nature doubtless accomplishes all that God ever intended that it should accomplish. It serves His full purpose in the line of a general revelation, and affords moreover the requisite theatre for special revelations. The special, or extraordinary, has the virtue of the extraordinary only as it stands in antithesis to the ordinary. By the union of the two, God is known not merely as law, or force working according to law, but as living and present personality, interested in men, and reaching forth a hand to lift them up into fellowship with Himself. Nature is sufficiently honored by this view, since it is left to

accomplish all that it is intrinsically fitted to accomplish; and divine wisdom is sufficiently magnified, since it is represented as making that combination of factors which is intrinsically best suited to the enlightenment and education of the race — that combination, namely, in which the impression made by a persistent scheme of natural law is supplemented by the vitality of incentive which belongs to the special or extraordinary, partly by reason of the essential worth of its content, and partly by reason of its very contrast with the ordinary and recurring.

Special revelation may be outward, in the sphere of external nature or in the visible history of men and nations; or, it may be inward, consisting in a message to some elect spirit among men, who then becomes the instrument for its communication to others. By the union of these forms of manifestation the body of truth which is contained in the Bible has been provided. The Bible is the great depository of special revelations. In considering therefore the process by which it has been prepared, and in examining the characteristics which legitimate the belief that it contains the authentic truth of God, we are filling out the theme which is most prominently suggested by the term revelation.

II. — Rational Presuppositions Respecting the Process of Revelation, as Founded in the Intellectual and Moral Limitations of Men.

As respects the process of revelation, certain rational presuppositions may be laid down with a good degree of certainty. In the first place a sound theory of cognition will not allow us to assume a purely passive subject of revelation. In order to mental assimilation a certain amount of mental action is indispensable. A manifestation upon which the mind should not react according to its constitution would induce only a blind impression. It could have no real import for the person to

whom it might be addressed, and of course he could be no fit instrument for communicating its import to another.

Since mental activity is requisite for any appropriation of knowledge, the capacity for revelation — that is, for apprehending the import of divine manifestation — must in a sense be measured by the capacity for mental activity. As the human teacher cannot immediately transfer the treasures of his learning to the child, but must wait on his gradually unfolding capacity, so the Divine Teacher cannot discard the limitations of the human mind. What if there is infinite ability on the divine side to impart? There is limited power of apprehension on the human side. This power may be enlarged through a certain scale without violence to the mental constitution, but there is always a point, at any given time, which cannot be passed in consistency with personal identity or the continuity of the mental life. To make an undeveloped mind, which is still struggling with the mysteries of the alphabet, suddenly recipient of profound metaphysical truth, would be like alienating it from itself, or displacing it by another mental subject — a consummation to be characterized rather as profoundly unnatural than as simply supernatural. A similar stretch of magic would occur if a soul which had been immersed in the life of sense should instantaneously be lifted up to a lofty and comprehensive understanding of things spiritual. God cannot be expected to treat His workmanship with so little regard as to cancel the laws of development which He has implanted in the mental constitution.

If there are intellectual limitations to revelation, there are also moral. The two are, in fact, closely related. As man is not a purely intellectual being, the ground upon which opinions are held is very apt to be something else than purely intellectual considerations. The will and the affections are potent factors in the choice and tenure of opinions. In proportion as there is egoism or self-idolatry in a person, he will naturally be inclined to regard his customary judgments with

somewhat of idolatrous veneration. In proportion as impetuous zeal is characteristic of a man he will be likely to answer opposition to cherished opinions with quick resentment. Prejudice instinctively repels as an enemy all light that shines for an opposing conclusion. Thus opinions and beliefs become intrenched behind tempers and tendencies that have more or less of a moral character. This is true of the best and sincerest men. Accordingly, in almost any human subject of revelation that can be selected, we must suppose a moral barrier to perfect recipiency; some tinge of egoism, some remnant of prejudice, some pride of opinion, some disinclination to revise what has been closely associated with one's self, one's nation, or one's sect. No doubt hindrances of this order may be ameliorated by divine grace. There are, in truth, indications that the same Spirit which illuminated the minds of the prophets as to outside matters, disclosed to them so vividly their own imperfection as greatly to humble and chasten. But, still, in proportion as it is unwarrantable to assume irresistible grace, or to take for granted the entire sanctification of any given subject of revelation, it is necessary to suppose recipiency for the divine message to be qualified on one side or another.

Analogy points in the same direction as the foregoing conclusions. The natural kingdom lies before the face of all men, and is ever uttering its message. Why has that message been understood so slowly? Because the object has been so much larger than the mental capacity, or power of insight, which has been set over against it. Even the foremost minds have been recipient of only a part of the message. Inherited misconceptions have restrained them on the one side, and on the other they have been hemmed in by their own limited vision. By the necessities of the case, the interpretation of nature has advanced through many successive stages, the discoveries of one age serving as a platform for a wider outlook in the succeeding. Why, in man's understanding of the vast

spiritual universe, should it be conceived that there is a radically different law of progress? Special divine interposition may undoubtedly facilitate progress in this sphere, and bring to a goal which could not be reached without its aid; but even omnipotence cannot make finitude anything else than finitude, nor consistently cancel the law of gradual unfoldment which is a prime condition of mental integrity.

It is seen, then, that if we are to credit such considerations as the necessary activity of the mind upon anything which is really appropriated, the fact that this activity is subject to intellectual and moral limitations, which cannot be eliminated on the instant, and the analogy of progress in the understanding of the natural world, we must conclude that an ample revelation from God could become the property of the race only by an extended process.

III. — The Method of the Biblical Revelation as Corresponding with the Presuppositions.

A glance into the Scriptures will readily show that they exhibit a method of revelation which is in full accord with the rational presuppositions. Everywhere they illustrate the requirement of deference to the limited capacity of men, the need of disciplinary and educational expedients, the demand that providence should concur with inspiration, or the practical necessity of employing the aid of special historical circumstances in leading forward the organs of revelation to enlarged religious perceptions. Take such a favored group of men as the apostles. After having enjoyed the matchless tuition of Christ throughout His public ministry, had they come to a perfect understanding of the divine kingdom? On the contrary, they were still greatly in need of light, and apparently were not able, in the days of their consternation and bereavement, to construe at all the foundation facts of Christianity as em-

bodied in the sufferings and death of the Redeemer. Nor did the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost complete their furnishing. For years after that great enduement their minds were more or less clouded on so important a question as the relation of the newly-founded Church to Judaism. It required the march of events — the spread of Christianity beyond Jewish limits, and the demonstration that the acceptance of the gospel message brought to the uncircumcised all the fruits of the Spirit — to fully convince the apostles that the middle wall of partition between Jew and Gentile had been broken down. To bring their feelings into complete unison with the new point of view still more may have been needed. We can easily believe that such a complete surmounting of ingrained preference for the Jewish people as appears in the fourth Gospel could not have been illustrated among the original disciples, until the destruction of the temple and prolonged experience of the stubborn hostility of the Jewish nation to the name of Christ had severed old bonds, and allowed the attention to be directed to the Gentile world as the field of real promise for Christianity.

If the law of gradual progress was thus illustrated by those who stood in the culminating light of revelation, there is no reason to doubt that it was operative during the antecedent stages. Grant that it is going beyond warrant to make the Old Testament revelation simply a product of the historic evolution of Israel; it is still legitimate and necessary to regard the revelation as closely connected with and dependent upon the history. The exceptional experiences of the nation were made efficient means for impressing religious lessons, and none profited so much by these lessons as the elect spirits who were naturally chosen to be the spokesmen for Jehovah. Majestic providences went before lofty conceptions of God. That marvelous interposition, by which Israel was rescued from Egyptian bondage and settled in the land of promise, became a permanent factor in the higher range of Hebrew piety. In

the whole list of great prophets there was not one whose conceptions of the divine attributes and the national vocation were not shaped by the story of the exodus and the wilderness march. And the great events of the following ages had not a little to do with the current of religious ideas. Especially fruitful was the long ordeal of apprehension and disaster which reached its crisis in the desolation of the Holy Land and the scattering of its people in exile. The greatest prophets wrote under a profound impression of divine chastisements appointed to their nation. They felt, as it were, the tremor in the ground caused by the distant tread of hostile armies, or were witnesses of the ruin which the spoilers left in their track. The flood of afflictions was like a new and greater Red Sea baptism, testing faith in Jehovah, exalting it where it stood firm, and imbuing it with an element of peculiar tenderness. Hope, stimulated and fortified by the record of marvelous providences in the past, mingled with patriotic grief over impending or accomplished disaster to produce an unrivaled literature. If it is true that the prophets were divinely-guided interpreters of events, it is equally true that the events which came under their contemplation were utilized to shape their thought and feeling, and helped to interpret to them the character and purposes of God.

In the Psalms, also, the historic basis of revelation is very conspicuous. The experiences of a thousand years are wrapt up in these lyrics. Back of their interplay of light and shadow was the long record of glory and shame, deliverance and chastisement, victory and humiliation. They are filled with manifold riches, and have a catholic adaptation because they reflect so widely the heights and depths of national and personal experience. Whatever else may have been indispensable, the long train of experiences was needed to evoke from Israel's harps these deep and varied strains.

In the progress of revelation, the outward and the inward, the element of historic suggestion and the element of spiritual

impact or monition, were doubtless woven together too subtly for finite insight to determine exactly their respective spheres. Human onesidedness can easily be betrayed into an undue disparagement of the latter as well as of the former. Still, it is clearly none too much to say, that both a rational estimate of man's limitations and a candid observation of the conditions of biblical production emphasize the dependence of revelation upon a historic process. Divine deeds, quite as much as divine inspirations, have furnished the subject-matter of the Bible. Indeed, revelation might be defined with approximate exactness as a series of divine deeds, apprehended in a consciousness vivified and illuminated by the Divine Spirit. The contrary view, which makes revelation simply a bundle of communications that were delivered out and out from heaven into the minds of passive recipients, is unphilosophical, and so far aside from reality as to be fairly whimsical.

IV. — The Proof for the Bible which is Involved in its Comprehensiveness, or in the Variety and Balance of the Factors which it contains.

The intimacy and breadth of historical connections, which distinguish the contents of the Bible, rightly arrest the attention when one is looking to the grounds of the belief that a veritable revelation has been given to men. Indeed, historical comprehensiveness, or that which it provides for, namely, a special variety and balance of factors, is no mean credential of the Christian's Bible. As respects this character it may safely challenge comparison. No other compendium of sacred literature appears as a successful rival. It is the unique glory of the biblical revelation, that, in the vast sweep and variety of its movement, it offsets its own limitations, lifts, sooner or later, into due prominence all important truths of religion, and presents them as parts of an organic whole.

Even if we limit our view to the Old Testament, we may notice a very significant balance of factors. On the one hand was the Law, majestic in its Sinaitic compendium, stern in many of its prescriptions, minute and exacting in its ceremonial requirements. It was Israel's schoolmaster, and fulfilled a needed function of discipline. To everyone who was at all alive to its import it was a standing witness and object-lesson on the claims of the divine holiness. It served also as a national cement, impressed upon Israel a sense of her peculiar vocation, and fostered such definite religious habits as were adapted to be a bulwark against the intrusion of alien systems. On the other hand was Prophecy, the advocate of the spirit rather than of the form; emphasizing inward righteousness incomparably more than ceremonial cleanness; not disdainful of outward sacrifices, but capable of spurning them when presented as a substitute for the inward offering of true submission and loyal devotion to Jehovah; a faithful witness to the supremacy of ethical interests, a foe to empty ecclesiasticism, and a friend of spiritual worship.

Some modifications of this broad contrast might perhaps be pointed out; but the general antithesis holds good, and is a mark of comprehensiveness in the Old Testament religion. By the union, in the same dispensation, of Law and Prophecy different and apparently conflicting interests were satisfied. If the Law served to impress the notion of duty, to compact the religion of Israel, and to fortify it against disintegrating contact with Gentile systems, Prophecy was needed to spiritualize the conception of duty, to add progressiveness to stability, to bring the universal principles of religion into view, and thus to act as the congenial forerunner of the universal faith of Christianity.[1]

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[1] It may be noticed that recent criticism, while subordinating Law to Prophecy in respect of value, does not deny an important vocation to the former. Thus W. Robertson Smith says: "The legal ritual did not satisfy the highest spiritual needs, but it practically extinguished idolatry. It gave palpable expression to the

A less distinct antithesis than that between Law and Prophecy, but one which nevertheless illustrates the balance of factors in the Old Testament, is that between the Literature of Devotion and the Literature of Wisdom. The one is the outburst of religious feeling under all varied conditions ; the other is the product of moral and religious reflection, joined with not a little of the prudence derived from a large experience of the world. The former has its great compendium in the Psalms, which share largely in the spirit of Prophecy, but constitute a distinct type of sacred writing in the predominance of the devotional over every other interest. The latter includes both the terse aphorisms of the Book of Proverbs and the lofty poem in which Job and his companions discuss the deep problem of the divine rule in its relations to human suffering. The one group supplements the other as clear-sighted prudence and reflective wisdom supplement spontaneous emotion. That the two should be combined in the same volume which contains the Law and Prophecy is no mean token of comprehensiveness. Had the Old Testament, like the Koran, been prepared by a single hand, it could have included no such wealth of mutually supplementary factors.

In the framework of its theology, also, a comprehensiveness and balance pertain to the Old Testament which place it in favorable contrast with the ethnic systems. It conserves reality both to God and the creature, and upholds the ethical relation between them. All pantheistic and nihilistic theories, with their ultimate sacrifice of ethical values, are quite aside from its standpoint. It has no affinity with the Brahmanical doctrine of reabsorption, no share in the Buddhistic aspiration

spiritual nature of Jehovah, and, around and within the ritual prophetic truths gained a hold of Israel such as they had never had before. . . . That the Law was a divine institution, that it formed an actual part in the gracious scheme of guidance which preserved the religion of Jehovah as a living power in Israel till shadow became substance in the manifestation of Christ, is no theory, but an historical fact, which no criticism as to the origin of the books of Moses can in the least degree invalidate." (The Old Testament in the Jewish Church, pp. 313, 314.)

after the suspension of concrete existence. On the contrary, endless fellowship with God, ministered through moral likeness, is the ideal toward which it tends by virtue of its interior truth and life, even where it does not come to an explicit affirmation of that ideal. It also keeps clear of the dualistic extreme. While it is penetrated by an intense view of the might and prevalence of evil in the world, it does not, like Zoroastrianism, abridge the ethical character of the antithesis between good and evil by carrying it up into the Godhead, or making it originally characteristic of created being. If its stress upon the supremacy and sovereignty of God is somewhat akin to a trait of Mohammedanism, in its broader portrayal of the divine attributes, it gives in the aggregate no such image of arbitrary might as dominated the Mohammedan conception. In the Psalms and the prophetical writings there are passages descriptive of the divine tenderness which cannot be matched from the pages of the Koran. It is also to be remembered in any comparative view, that Mohammedanism in the better range of its contents is rather to be described as a mutilated copy of the Old Testament religion than as an original contribution of the Arabian prophet.

If we extend the view so as to include the New Testament, we shall greatly enlarge the illustration of the sweep of revelation and of the effective way in which it has brought organic completeness out of variety and contrast. In the first place, as respects the relation between the two Testaments, a broad contrast is undoubtedly apparent. But the contrast is one which rather confirms than denies the divine office of the Hebraic dispensation. It is, in large part, the contrast between approaching dawn and the bright sunrise. If there is any contradiction between the earlier and the later revelation, it is on points which the earlier, by its own advance, tended to revise in the direction of the later. Does the New Testament rise above all national bounds and race distinctions? There are foregleams of this grand universalism in the Old

Testament.[1] Does the gospel disclose God to men as the Father in heaven? The Old Testament made at least an initial advance towards this conception; if in the main it did not venture to represent the individual as standing before Jehovah in the filial relation, it did assume that relation for Israel as the chosen people.[2] Does the New Testament light up the world beyond with the anticipated glory of an immortal life? The volume of the older dispensation was not closed till it had recorded some premonitions or glimpses of victory over death and the grave.[3] And so as regards other truths which may be considered distinctive of the New Testament system; if they are to be pronounced beyond the Old Testament, this is to be understood generally in a comparative rather than in an absolute sense. The movement of that revelation was in their direction, even as Christ declared that He came not to destroy the Law and the Prophets, but to fulfill, that is, to achieve their ideal meaning and purpose.[4]

While the general character of the antithesis between the two grand divisions of revelation is that between limited and full disclosure, a qualification is necessary. The majesty and holiness of God are portrayed in such lofty terms in the Hebrew Scriptures that it is not easy to conceive of the possibility of more impressive delineations. It was not necessary that the New Testament should make God more transcendently majestic, but that it should facilitate the sense of fellowship with Him, by clothing His overshadowing greatness with

[1] Ps. lxxxvii; Isa. ii. 2–4, xix. 23–25, xlix. 6, lvi. 3–7, lx. 3; Mic. iv. 1–4; Jer. iii. 17; Zeph. iii. 9, 10; Zech. xiv. 16.

[2] Ex. iv. 22; Deut. viii. 5; Ps. lxxiii. 15; Prov. iii. 12; Hos. xi. 1; Isa. lxiii. 16, lxiv. 8; Jer. xxxi. 9; Mal. i. 6.

[3] Deut. xxxii. 39; 1 Sam. ii. 6; Ps. xvi. 10, 11, xlix, 15, lxxiii. 24–26; Hos. vi. 2, xiii. 14; Isa. xxv. 8, xxvi. 19, liii. 9, 10; Dan. xii. 2.

[4] The words of Hermann Schultz may appropriately be added: "There is positively not one New Testament idea that cannot be conclusively shown to be a healthy and natural product of some Old Testament germ, nor any truly Old Testament idea which did not instinctively press towards its New Testament fulfillment." (Old Testament Theology, I. 52.)

the light of fatherly goodness and redeeming love. As a mind which has felt the unapproachable majesty and purity of God is best prepared to appreciate the privilege of fellowship with Him, it is evident that the function of the Old Testament was not wholly absorbed in preparation for the New. It does more than register the historic process which led on to the gospel. In its sublime descriptions of the divine exaltation and holiness it provides in perpetuity a fitting background for true worship. Also in other lines the Old Testament remains serviceable, both as approximating to the plane of the New in its subject-matter, and as putting truth in that vivid concrete form which most readily takes hold of the imagination. It remains thus a book of edification, notwithstanding a great expansion of the spiritual horizon was effected by the gospel.

Taking still further the New Testament by itself, it is not difficult to see how different types have supplemented one another, and so ministered to the wealth and completeness of the revelation. This holds of the Gospels. It was undoubtedly of great importance to have the life of Christ presented in its plain objectivity, and this has been accomplished by the Synoptists. To a very large extent they kept themselves out of their narratives, and occupied themselves with reproducing as far as possible the words and deeds of Christ. Doubtless they used some liberty in grouping the sayings of the master. It may also be granted that the peculiarities of their individual position had a certain effect. For example, Matthew, because of his antecedents and surroundings, may have had more ambition to associate the events of Christ's life with Old Testament types and foreshadowings than was shown by Luke under the influence of a close association with the Gentile world. But still, there is only moderate evidence of subjective tinge in any one of the Synoptical Gospels. We have here a record of what had been offered at large to the eyes and ears of men, or at least had fallen under the observation of the disciples in common. Narratives so nearly colorless, giving

such a line of events in their simple objectivity, are of inestimable value. But, on the other hand, congenial interpretation is not of slight consequence. To know how Christ was imaged in the mind of one who stood specially near to Him, and whose receptive spirit retained a distinct impress of the more private discourses of his Master, as well as of His public words and deeds, is to gain an additional means of acquaintanceship with that Master. In this view, the fourth Gospel makes an invaluable supplement to the other three. Grant that the words of Christ are rendered therein somewhat freely, are given, so to speak, in a Johannine dialect; it is still an advantage to have the report of one whose spiritual and idealizing temper fitted him to appropriate and to transmit the more ideal import of the life and teaching of Christ.

The Johannine literature, especially that portion of it which embraces the fourth Gospel and the Epistles of John, represents a distinct theologic type, on the extreme border of the apostolic age. It was preceded by two other types, one of which, the Pauline, was no less clearly marked; the other, the Petrine, if not given so distinct literary expression as the Johannine and the Pauline, is still capable of being defined. The three types may be distinguished by their dominant view of the office of faith. In accordance with its practical bent the Petrine type conceives of faith preëminently as the energetic principle of a new life of consecration, steadfastness, and victorious struggle. In the Pauline type the stress is upon faith as an instrument of justification, the gracious condition of appropriating divine righteousness, the means of escaping from condemnation and legal bondage into the assured position of the children of God. The Johannine type portrays faith in particular as the medium of an eternal life begun in the present and realized progressively through abiding in the life and love of the Redeemer.

The significance of this union of different types needs little comment. It is an illustration of the rounded character of

the New Testament revelation; for these types are not exclusive but mutually supplementary. The manly energy of Petrinism is needed to guard Paulinism from an inert reliance upon the fullness of divine grace. The Pauline demonstration of the futility of legal righteousness is needed to secure Petrinism from the snare of an impertinent self-confidence and superficial piety. Both Petrinism and Paulinism need the softening and deepening effect of the Johannine conception of an interior union with God by the bond of love. The last needs both the Petrine and the Pauline standpoints to guard the doctrine of the interior life from being pushed into mystical exaggeration. In fine, by the addition of one type to another the circle of truth is filled out, and a corrective to one-sided developments is held forth to the view of all coming ages.

The illustration might be carried still further by considering such special varieties of form and contents as appear in the Epistle to the Hebrews and the Apocalypse — the one an eloquent and powerful plea for the superiority and finality of the dispensation inaugurated in Christ, the other affording peculiar riches to the religious imagination by its intense portrayal of struggle, triumph and reward. But enough has been said to indicate the extraordinary sweep of the biblical revelation and the extraordinary balance of its varied contents. These characteristics, we claim, are properly reckoned among the credentials of the Scriptures. We see, in face of them, how the method of the scriptural revelation corresponds to the facts of human limitation, inasmuch as completeness is reached through an age-long process wherein the varied capacities of a great circle of agents are utilized. The prolonged waiting on historical opportunities and the blending of diverse factors into a consistent system give an impressive view at once of divine patience and of divine skill.

V. — The Signal Proof for the Bible which is Contained in the Unique Personality of Christ, with its Appropriate Historical Antecedents and Consequents.

The scriptural revelation is essentially an organism of redemption. As such it finds naturally its unifying principle in the person and work of the Redeemer. We may specify accordingly, as a distinctive characteristic, the unique personality of Christ and its intimate and harmonious connection with the revelation as a whole. This is not merely among the foremost credentials of revelation; it is distinctively the foremost. The unique personality as it is imaged in the gospel narratives, the forecast of the same in Messianic prophecy, and the Christ-filled content of the whole apostolic literature, make together the very heart of Christian evidence.

Without attempting any complete study of Christ's person, in this connection, we may properly notice some of the points which make His life unique in earthly biography. Taking what lies on the surface of the New Testament story, we cannot fail to be struck with a certain appearance of breadth and magnanimity in Christ, a union of contrasted qualities such as never could have been reconciled within the compass of an ordinary nature.

A true marvel is Christ's union of meekness with strength. He characterized Himself as meek and lowly in heart, and the tenor of the gospel history confirms the description. His childhood was spent in quiet subjection to parental authority. Apparently no advantage was taken of any presage respecting His lofty dignity and office which may have found a place in His consciousness. To be sure, we read that at the age of twelve He talked with the doctors in the temple. But there is no reason to suppose that in this He made any impression of a brusque forwardness, or manifested any other disposition than that of a sweet-spirited inquisitiveness and intelligence.

He contented Himself with obscurity till the appointed hour for the manifestation of His Messianic dignity; and then, though He accepted unavoidable publicity, He rejected ostentation. He was ready always to work miracles at the dictate of benevolence, but never at the call for mere display. Miscalculating zeal for His person was repressed rather than encouraged; when the overflowing enthusiasm of the people would sweep Him on to kingly honors He retired and hid Himself. But, with all this meekness, what strength! In the very manner of His speech there was something singularly masterful. He spoke as if truth were His by insight, and there was no need to draw from outside sources. As Beyschlag remarks, "The spring of divine revelation wells up in Him quietly and constantly, not while he is exalted above Himself, but while simply Himself and giving Himself. It is the eternal foundation of His personal life from which His words of eternal life at all times flow."[1] He quoted indeed from Moses and the prophets, but evidently not as unqualifiedly subject to their point of view; for He distinctly placed Himself above the plane of the Mosaic legislation, and assumed at one point and another to provide better maxims than it contained. And not only did He teach in this authoritative manner; He made claims to personal allegiance which He would not allow to be abated by any rival whatever. When men pleaded the ties of kinship for delay or compromise in His service, He told them that no one could be His disciple who should allow father or mother, sister or brother, to take precedence of Him. When vested authority, tradition, and priestly assumption crossed His path in the persons of the Pharisees, He met their opposition with a perfectly unbending mien, and responded to their captious criticisms with a scorching exposure of their hypocrisy and selfishness. Indeed, no teacher besides, to whom men attach sanity, ever assumed

[1] New Testament Theology, I. 37,

such authority or was so absolutely remote from all compromise.

A true marvel also in Christ is the union of full compassion toward the sinner with sharp intolerance for sin. This is a combination which overtaxes human infirmity. With men, ordinarily, either sympathy infringes more or less upon the domain of principle, or principle trenches in some measure upon that of sympathy. It does not seem to have been so with Christ. Who can imagine a being more tenderly compassionate toward the sinner, more warmly sympathetic toward unworthiness struggling up toward better things? Surely if the prophetic picture of one who should not break the bruised reed or quench the smoking flax was ever fulfilled, it was here. His ministry was like the dew and the sunshine, reviving sensibility and hope where there had been indifference or despair. Persons who would have shrunk from the ordinary teacher had the confidence to come to Him. But, on the other hand, who can imagine a being more intolerant of sin than Christ appears. He scourges it out of the temple and locks every door against it. He goes back of the outward act and raises a judgment-seat over the inward motion and the disposition. He arraigns intemperate and unfounded anger as proximate to the guilt of murder. He brands the unchaste desire which follows the glance as having already the stain of adultery. He will have no division in the heart between God and mammon, no dallying with any form of evil. "If thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out and cast it from thee. And if thy right hand offend thee, cut it off and cast it from thee." His language expresses a mighty vehemence against sin, an intense repulsion against all unrighteousness.

Again, a remarkable union of spirituality and kindly contact with the world may be noticed in Christ. His life was most unworldly in tone. It mounted so completely above the ordinary interests and ambitions of men that it is difficult for us to conceive how they could be to Him any source of temptation.

His exhortations to renounce anxious cares about the stores which the morrow may bring, to lay up treasure in heaven, and to estimate the recording of one's name there the supreme cause for rejoicing, indicate how lightly he trod upon the face of this temporal world, and how truly the spiritual realm was His real home. But, at the same time, the life of Christ gives no impression of asceticism or monastic severity. We never see Him standing with a scourge over the body; He heals instead of mutilating. He manifests no reluctance to grace with His presence the innocent festivities of the day. We never hear Him denouncing the material world as evil or unclean. He treats it rather as the workmanship of His Father's hands, and uses it as a book of divinity from which to read off to His hearers most spiritual and beautiful messages of truth. In short, He stands in two worlds, and shows how a lofty estimate of the one need not cancel a sympathetic interest in the other.

Once more, a transcendent distinction of Christ is seen in the union which He exemplifies of human sensibility with superhuman grandeur. Page after page of the gospel narrative approves to the full the title which He gave Himself. He was truly the Son of Man, full of all human sensibility. We see it in His affectionate discourses to His disciples, in His embracement and blessing of little children, in His compassion for the fasting multitude, in His intimacy with the family at Bethany, in His tears at the tomb of Lazarus, in His desire that chosen friends should be near Him in the time of His agony in the garden, in the tender words which He spoke from the cross, commending His mother to the care of a faithful disciple. But with all this fullness of human sensibility, how much is revealed that rises above the human plane. Not a single token of repentance is found in the life of Christ. A liturgy formed after the pattern of His intercourse with heaven would not be adapted to any church or to any individual upon earth. So far as can be discovered, no feeling

of ill-desert ever weighted the flight of his soul toward the Father. Standing apart from sin, exempt from its stain, its humiliation, and its confusion, he recognized Himself as being at once the redeemer and judge of a race of sinners. In the assured confidence that He was mediating the true knowledge of God, He declared that whoever had seen Him had seen the Father, and proclaimed Himself the way, the truth, and the life. Though consciously proceeding to crucifixion, without a soldier or a statesman in His retinue, He yet spoke as though He had under His feet a kingdom such as had never been pictured in the dreams of earthly ambition — a kingdom whose full circuit sweeps around all times and worlds and ranks of intelligent beings.

When we observe that the lofty consciousness in Christ respecting His station and vocation was combined with the most perfect balance of the finest human traits, we cannot deny it great significance. The extraordinary balance pledges clearness and sobriety of self-consciousness. Christ's sense of a special union with the Father is made thus a congruous element in the gospel picture, and certifies to us that He was the Son of God as well as the Son of Man, Lord over men as well as brother of men.

The appearance of this unique personality is, and must remain, the great event of history, the fact to which the attention and the inquiries of men must ceaselessly revert. As Bushnell has said: "It were easier to untwist all the beams of light in the sky, separating and expunging one of the colors, than to get the character of Jesus, which is the real gospel, out of the world." It must stand as the superlative miracle. No miracle that Christ is recorded to have wrought approaches the miracle of His personality. We see Him indeed through the mirror of the gospel narratives. But we are compelled to credit their substantial accord with the historical reality. The incomparable model must have been before the primitive disciples, or the characteristics of the gospel picture mount above

all rational explanation. Moreover, the historical reality is needed to give a consistent meaning to most remarkable antecedents and consequents.

If the singular wealth of Christ's person attests His divine mission, that misson is also approved by the singular preparation which was made for His advent. What earthly biography beside ever had such a preface as was furnished to that of Christ by Messianic prophecy?

It is doubtless true that prophecy did not attain to complete foresight either of Christ's person or work. The prophets saw in a mirror darkly. Sharing in the common limitations of men, they were compelled to use the colors at hand in painting the future. Much, therefore, of the local and the specifically Judaic entered into their pictures. The coming salvation was not always seen by them in the full glory of its spirituality and universality, nor its bearer in the full height of His unique character. The reality in the gospel, it must be confessed, was in very important respects better than the prophetic ideal. But it is still one of the marvels of history that an ideal was wrought out which so aptly prefaced the crowning revelation of divine grace.

It may be conceded, also, that, in order to conserve a Messianic application to many passages, the principle of a typical sense in prophecy must be taken with considerable latitude. And this may reasonably be done, though of course there is in this line some danger of arbitrariness and excess. An idealizing faculty, working within the limits of a preliminary dispensation, is naturally constructive of typical representations. As the dispensation reaches forward to consummations lying beyond itself, so the ideals that are gathered out of it, whatever partial fulfillment they may find at an earlier stage, cannot have their complete realization short of the dispensation lying beyond. In the onward movement a partial fulfillment is equivalent to a demand and a presage of

a more perfect fulfillment; in other words, a preliminary stage in the unfoldment of an ideal becomes a type for the stage of perfection, much as in the evolution of organic nature a characteristic belonging to a given stage may serve as a type or prophecy of what is to be found at a more advanced stage. Take, for example, the picture of a righteous sufferer in the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah. Suppose that the prophet, as some interpreters have thought, conceived of afflicted Israel collectively, or at least of an elect portion of the nation, as the subject of this tender portrayal. In proportion as Israel failed to realize the ideal of a guiltless sufferer and intercessor, a demand was evoked for a more perfect realization, and the immediate subject of the delineation necessarily became typical of the ultimate subject. And so of other passages. As in the ascending scale some of the features of Christianity are of necessity typical of heaven, so much that came nearest to the ideal in Judaism was of necessity typical of Christ and His kingdom. It is in this significance that a second sense may be attached to various prophecies. The prophet, in uttering them, had no double meaning in his mind; but sketching an ideal within the limits of a preliminary dispensation, he gave a pattern which could be only partially filled out by a near development, the completer realization having to wait for the more perfect dispensation.[1]

The minds of the prophets were directed to a Messianic outlook by two great motives, either of which must be regarded as worthy of the Spirit of God. These were an intense love of righteousness and a courageous optimism. The former

[1] On the rational grounds for conceding a considerable place to Messianic types in the Old Testament, the following will not appear out of place: "If the incarnation was, indeed, a great 'recapitulation of the past,' the manifestation in its fullness of a divine purpose predestined from the beginning, it is not surprising that the actions and experiences of ancient prophets, saints, priests, martyrs and kings, should have been prophetic; that in these should have been foreshadowed different aspects of Christ's office and person." (Ottley, Aspects of the Old Testament, p. 410.)

would not allow them to be satisfied with any lesser end than the triumph of righteousness, the establishment of such a holy commonwealth as should be a delight to Jehovah and a praise to His name. The latter would not allow them to despair of the attainment of this great end, but kept their hearts aglow with bright anticipations, even in the face of dire calamities. Clinging tenaciously to their lofty hopes, they apprehended some compensation for every failure, and over every imperfect phase of the national life and economy they drew the outlines of a high ideal. Was the ancient covenant before the minds of the prophets as something which had been broken, and was no longer effective to bind Israel? They looked forward to a time when a new and better covenant should be introduced; when the Lord should betroth Israel unto Himself in righteousness, and in judgment, and in lovingkindness, and in mercies; when the law shall be written upon the hearts of the people, and they shall know the Lord, from the least unto the greatest of them; when a redeemer shall come to Zion, and to those that turn from transgression in Jacob, and the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon them, and His words shall not depart out of their mouth.[1] Was the attention of the prophets directed to their own order? They apprehended that the prophetical succession would be crowned by one who should more than realize the mediatorial position of Moses, — a faithful servant of Jehovah, who shall bring forth judgment unto the Gentiles, who shall be given for a covenant to the people and a light to the Gentiles, to open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the dungeon, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison house, being anointed to preach good tidings, to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, to comfort all that mourn, that he may be the salvation of the Lord to the ends of the earth.[2] Did the minds of the prophets

[1] Hosea ii. 18–23; Jer. xxxi. 31–37; Isa. lix. 20, 21, xlii. 6, lv. 3; Ezek. xxxvii. 26–28.

[2] Deut. xviii. 15; Isa. xlii. 1–7, xlix. 1–6, lxi. 1–3.

revert to suffering and sacrifice as conditions of salvation? They caught at least occasional glimpses of a great sufferer, a reproach of men and despised of the people, whose hands and feet were pierced, whose visage was marred more than any man, a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief, wounded for others' transgressions and bruised for their iniquities, led as a lamb to the slaughter, bearing the iniquities of many, and having his soul made an offering for sin.[1] Did the prophets reflect upon the possibilities of a consecrated kingship as an instrument of righteousness? They looked forward to the appearing of a scion of David's house, a Messianic king, under whose benign and everlasting rule mercy and truth should meet together. As described by the Psalmist, he is the Lord's son, to whom the nations are appointed for an inheritance and the uttermost parts of the earth for a possession. He shall come down like rain upon the mown grass, as showers that water the earth, and his dominion shall be from sea to sea and from the river unto the ends of the earth. He shall be at once priest and king — a priest forever, after the order of Melchizedek.[2] In like exalted strains, Isaiah pictures the anointed king: "There shall come a shoot out of the stock of Jesse and a branch out of his roots shall bear fruit: and the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, and the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge, and the fear of the Lord. Righteousness shall be the girdle of his reins. The government shall be

[1] Ps. xxii; Zech. xii. 10; Isa. lii. 14, liii. In reviewing Isaiah liii, one can easily sympathize with the opinion of Hermann Schultz, that the writer was carried over from the contemplation of the suffering of Israel's saints, and led to picture an ideal sufferer and intercessor. He says: "The figure from which he starts is the actual historical figure of which he has so often spoken. But he is raised above himself. The figure which he beholds is embodied in an ideal figure in which he sees salvation accomplished, and all the riddles of the present solved. If it is true anywhere in the history of poetry and prophecy, it is true here, that the writer, being full of the Spirit, has said more than he himself meant to say, and more than he himself understood." (Old Testament Theology, II. 431–433.)

[2] Ps. ii, lxxii, cx. Compare Zech. vi. 12, 13.

upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government, and of peace, there shall be no end upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to establish it with judgment and righteousness from henceforth, even forever."[1] Something of the same inspiring hope appears with Jeremiah. "Behold the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and he shall reign as king and deal wisely, and shall execute judgment and justice in the land. In his days, Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely: and this is the name whereby he shall be called, The Lord is our righteousness."[2] Micah and Zechariah picture the earthly circumstances which are to mark the coming prince of David's house. "Thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, which art little among the thousands of Judah, out of thee shall one come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel, whose goings forth are from of old, from everlasting."[3] "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold thy king cometh unto thee: he is just, and having salvation, lowly, and riding upon an ass, even upon a colt, the foal of an ass."[4] In Daniel's picture, on the other hand, the aspect of heavenly majesty stands in the foreground. "I saw in the night visions, and, behold there came with the clouds of heaven one like unto a son of man, and he came even to the Ancient of Days, and they brought him near before Him. And there was given him dominion and glory, and a kingdom, that all the peoples, nations and languages should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed."[5]

As is the glory of the Messianic king, so also is the blessedness of his kingdom. It is described as a kingdom from which

[1] Isaiah xi. 1–5, ix. 6, 7.
[2] Jeremiah xxiii. 5, 6. Compare xxxiii. 15; Ezek. xxxiv. 23, xxxvii. 25–28.
[3] Micah v. 2. [4] Zech. ix. 9. [5] Daniel vii. 13, 14.

all malice and wildness have been banished, a realm of peace and fruitfulness, abounding in such life-giving streams as make even the desert to blossom as the rose, enriched with a plenty which offers wine and milk without money and without price, over whose people Jehovah rejoices as the bridegroom over the bride, to whose dwellings no darkness approaches, for the Lord shall be Israel's everlasting light, and the days of her mourning shall be ended.[1] Indeed, unless the descriptions be taken as highly wrought emblems of spiritual peace and fullness, the prophetic vision lies ahead of us still, and will not blend fully with the reality this side of the heavenly border. Whether taken in the nearer or the more remote application, it appears as a glorious forecast of the Messianic kingdom.

Thus the love of righteousness in the prophets, and their courageous optimism, flowered forth under divine guidance into various lines of prediction. What though one and another representation bears, as has been granted, traces of the writer's special surroundings? The drawing of so many minds toward such high levels of hope and the adaptation of their varied representations to fill out the picture of the Messiah are deeply significant facts. That prophetic idealism moved so far toward gospel reality is a manifest token that the same divine providence, wisdom, and love were back of both.

The picture which supplements the manifestation of the unique personality of Christ is as congruous with that personality as the picture which prefaced the manifestation. In full accord with the claims of Christ as the world's redeemer, the apostolic literature is permeated with a sense of His transcendent dignity and of the dependence of all the spiritual interests of men upon His gracious offices. He is described as the one Lord through whom are all things;[2] as having all things summed up in Himself;[3] as being the one in whom it

[1] Isa. xi. 6-9, xxxv., liv., lv., lx., lxv. 17–25. [2] 1 Cor. viii. 6. [3] Eph. i. 10.

pleased the Father that all fullness should dwell, and by whom He reconciles all things unto Himself;[1] as the foundation for which there is no substitute;[2] as the power of God and the wisdom of God;[3] as the Lord of the dead and the living;[4] as the Saviour who has abolished death and brought life and incorruption to light;[5] as the Lord of glory;[6] as the one whose face reveals the light of the knowledge of the glory of God;[7] as being the effulgence of the Father's glory and the very image of His substance;[8] as the author and perfector of faith;[9] as having a name in which every knee shall bow;[10] as the first and the last and holding the keys of death and Hades;[11] as the object of the doxology, in which the heavenly hosts unite in saying "Worthy is the Lamb that has been slain to receive the power, and riches, and wisdom, and might, and honor, and glory, and blessing";[12] as being along with the Lord Almighty the temple and the light of Heaven.[13]

Believers are described as the body of Christ;[14] as having redemption and cleansing from all sin through the blood of Christ;[15] as walking in Christ and rooted and built up in Him;[16] as being free in Christ from all condemnation;[17] as being crucified with Christ and finding also their life in Him;[18] as having Christ made unto them wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification;[19] as being in Christ new creatures.[20] In fine, the apostolic literature is one continuous illustration of the significance of Christ's person and of the overmastering impression made by His revelation of divine truth and saving purpose.[21]

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[1] Col. i. 19, 20.
[2] 1 Cor. iii. 11.
[3] 1 Cor. i. 24.
[4] Rom. xiv. 9.
[5] 2 Tim. i. 10.
[6] James ii. 1.
[7] 2 Cor. iv. 6.
[8] Heb. i. 3.
[9] Heb. xii. 2.
[10] Phil. ii. 10.
[11] Rev. i. 17, 18.
[12] Rev. v. 12.
[13] Rev. xxii. 23.
[14] 1 Cor. xii. 27.
[15] Eph. i. 7; 1 John i. 7.
[16] Col. ii. 6, 7.
[17] Rom. viii. 1.
[18] Rom. vi. 6; Gal. ii. 20.
[19] 1 Cor. i. 30.
[20] 2 Cor. v. 17.

[21] A testimony supplementary to that afforded by the apostolic literature might be taken from the tenor of history in later times. Here the words of Edgar Quinet are very suggestive. "The personal grandeur of Christ," he says, "is better demon-

Thus the chief factors of the Bible are united into a system of salvation. In the character of these factors and their harmonious relation to each other we have the incomparable evidence for revelation. The unique personality of Christ, the prophetic forecast of the same, and the manifested power of that personality in the apostolic literature unite to furnish a firm ground for rational faith.

VI. — Evidence for the Bible in the Facts of Prophetic Foresight.

The divine element in Messianic prophecy appears for the most part not so much in a minute forecast of the future as in the reach, elevation, and general appropriateness of expectation. It may be said also of prophecy as a whole that it gives the substance of coming developments rather than a precise sketch of events in their external features. Moreover, the demand for correspondence between prediction and the historical outcome may legitimately be regarded as modified in some instances by a conditional element in prophecy, or the understanding that a change in human conduct may effect a change in the divine ruling. Nevertheless, it is not to be overlooked that the Scriptures contain distinct predictions of

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strated by the movement and spirit of the times which have succeeded Him than by the Gospels themselves. If I knew nothing of the Scripture and had never heard the name of Jesus, I must always have thought that some extraordinary impulsion took place in the world about the time of the Cæsars. Whence came this impulsion and its wonderful results? When Strauss says that he regards the invention of the compass and steamboats as of more importance than the care of a few sick folk in Galilee, he is evidently the dupe of his own reasoning; for he knows as well as I do that the miracle of Christianity is not there, but rather in the great marvel of humanity cured of the evil of slavery, of the leprosy of caste, of the blindness of pagan sensuality, able to rise up and carry its bed far away from the old world. . . . The continual miracle of the gospel is the reign of a soul which felt itself greater than the visible universe." (Cited by C. M. Tyler, Bases of Religious Belief, pp. 227, 228.)

special events. Here and there are manifestations of a foresight which cannot be explained by any natural capacity of men.

As appears from Christ's conversations with His disciples, He contemplated His crucifixion as an event that was perfectly certain to occur. He foresaw His betrayal and the dispersion of His disciples. He pictured beforehand the denial of Peter, at the very moment when the confident disciple was protesting his undying fidelity. He painted in terms that were fulfilled to the letter the doom impending over Jerusalem and the temple. He forecast without a shadow of doubt that the very disciples who were to forsake Him in the hour of His humiliation would take up the cause of their crucified Master with the courage and zeal of martyrs, and would carry His gospel well towards the ends of the earth. He signified to Peter by what death he should glorify God. In short, the future seems to have been transparent to Christ so far as His vocation made a demand for foresight.

The prophets of Israel, also, in one and another instance confidently foretold specific events. A writer of known moderation, while contending that the prophets were not wont to picture events that had no apprehended connection with the circumstances of their age, adduces the following list of particular and unconditional predictions:[1] "Michaiah, the son of Imlah, prophesied that Ahab and Jehosaphat would be defeated by the Syrians, and permitted himself to be thrown into prison, with the declaration that he was willing to be regarded as a false prophet if his prediction were not fulfilled.[2] In a similar manner Amos predicted the approaching destruction of the Damascene kingdom and the carrying of the Syrians to Kir.[3] Isaiah had the fullest certainty that the kings, Rezin and Pekah, would not succeed in taking Jerusalem, and that in less than three years their countries would be devastated by the Assy-

[1] Riehm, Messianic Prophecy, pp. 92, 93.
[2] 1 Kings xxii. 17–36.
[3] Amos i. 3–5; 2 Kings xvi. 9.

rian armies,[1] and that the kingdom of Judah would be heavily afflicted by Assyria, from which it had expected help.[2] He also published the deliverance of Jerusalem from the army of Sennacherib, and the destruction of the latter by the direct interposition of Jehovah and the hasty flight of the remnant.[3] On the other hand, Jeremiah predicted the fixed purpose of God to accomplish the destruction of Jerusalem and the overthrow of the Jewish kingdom by His servant Nebuchadnezzar;[4] but he also foretold that in seventy years the judgments of God should overtake Babylon and bring about the deliverance and the return of the exiles;[5] and the same prophet predicted the death of the false prophet Hananiah in the course of the year."[6] Various items might be added to this list. Hosea, for example, foretold the downfall of Samaria at the hands of the Assyrians.[7] Micah predicted the destruction of Jerusalem and the Babylonian exile.[8] Isaiah declared in the days of Hezekiah that the royal treasures and princes should be carried off to Babylon.[9] The utter desolation prepared for Babylon was graphically described by Isaiah,[10] and Nahum portrayed the like fate for Nineveh.

In the case of Christ, foresight of the future must be regarded as harmonious at once with His lofty personality and with His unclouded intercourse with the Father. As regards the remaining circle of predictions, when we observe that their authors gave, in general, tokens of an intimate communion with God, it seems by far more reasonable to suppose here the work of the revealing Spirit than a series of merely human forecasts. Apparent failures of prophecies to meet a proper fulfillment cannot prove that there were no genuine or authoritative predictions. So far as not accounted for by a

[1] Isa. vii. 7, 16.
[2] Isa. vii. 18–25, viii. 5–7.
[3] Isa. x. 33, 34, xiv. 24–27, xxix. 7, 8, xxx. 27–33, xxxi. 5–9, xxxvii. 33–35.
[4] Jer. v. 15–17, xv. 1–4, xxi. 1–10.
[5] Jer. xvi. 14, 15, xxv. 11, 12, xxx. 18–20, xxxii. 42–44.
[6] Jer. xxviii. 16.
[7] Hosea viii., ix. 3.
[8] Micah iii. 12, iv. 10.
[9] Isa. xxxix; 2 Kings xx. 14–17.
[10] Isaiah xiii.

conditional element in prophecy, they would simply show that the prophetical spirit did not always operate under the fullest illumination. After all necessary abatement has been made it remains a significant distinction of the biblical revelation that the element of premonition which runs through so large a portion of its content reaches up, at one point and another, into the region of a supernatural foresight.

VII. — The Evidence Furnished by Miracles.

To one who accepts the fact of prophecy there can be no insuperable difficulty as respects the fact of miracles. They belong in common to the category of special revelations, and all the considerations which were urged at the beginning of this chapter for the credibility of such an order of revelations are as available for establishing the possibility of the one as of the other. No good reason can be assigned why the same God who elevates expectation and foresight above the plane of nature in the minds of the prophets may not manifest in external nature an energy which is above the plane of regular physical causation. Special revelation in the latter sphere cannot be more difficult than in the former.

As appears from the foregoing sentences, the term miracles is taken here in the limited sense which it has in current usage, and denotes that form of the supernatural which has its theatre in the sphere of sense-perceptions. Its significance is well expressed by Dorner as follows: "Miracles are sensuously cognizable events not comprehensible on the ground of the causality of nature and the given system of nature as such, but essentially on the ground of God's free action alone."[1]

Freedom and power supply the necessary conditions of miracles. As free personalities, men are able to produce in-

[1] System of Christian Doctrine, § 55.

numerable changes in the external world which the laws of nature, left to themselves, would never bring about. How shall that which lies within the competency of men be placed beyond the reach of the Divine Being? If God is free personality, nothing can be clearer than that He is able to work directly in the sphere of nature, and to work with a power which, transcending the human or creaturely measure, generates the miracle. Such working, supposing it to subserve a high moral purpose, would be in no sense eccentric, unnatural, or self-contradictory. It would rather be an exhibition of the eccentric and the unnatural if impersonal nature should be treated as though it were an end rather than an instrument, and its inviolability should be set above the necessities of the kingdom of righteousness. Doubtless the system of nature must have steadfastness and relative inviolability in order to accomplish its end. Without this character it could serve as no proper theatre for the subsistence and the education of the race. The miracle, however, does not interfere with this character in nature. It displaces and subverts no natural law.

As the free working of men introduces effects into nature without any injury to the integrity of the system, so also may the free working of God. The higher range of the effects in the latter case, which entitles them to be called miracles, makes no difference. The greatest miracle is as harmless as the least physical expression of man's free agency. Its introduction makes no jar, and when once introduced its total physical result blends harmoniously with the system of things. As when a man by his free choice casts a branch into a stream, it is borne on in accordance with the laws of nature, though those laws might never have brought it into the stream, so the physical effect of a miraculous working enters the stream of natural causes, and is borne on with its ceaseless flow. The stream neither generates the effect nor is turned aside by it; it simply takes up what is brought to it by divine interposition.

Miracles, then, in no wise undermine nature, and it can only be asked that divine prudence should so regulate their conditions that they shall not undermine a healthy reliance in men upon natural laws or the ordinary processes of the physical world. To secure this end it is necessary that miracles should be exceptional, and at that should be linked only with serious occasions.

Among the criteria of genuine miracles, and conditions of their evidential value, are to be named in particular the following: (1) intrinsic and recognizable connection with ends that may be regarded as worthy of divine wisdom and benevolence; (2) demonstrated efficiency to impress men healthfully, or to promote their moral and spiritual development; (3) confirmation by a sufficient amount of honest and intelligent testimony.

These three tests, it may be said without any undue disparagement of the last, belong together. Hume was, indeed, begging the question when he arrayed experience against testimony, and assumed that the former is so opposed to miracles as to completely negative the force of the latter in their favor. On that basis, nothing new or extraordinary could be made credible by testimony, which is just the same as saying that ordinary experience can reasonably be made the measure of all possible experience. Since by hypothesis miracles are exceptional events, experience of them must also be exceptional; and the force of this exceptional experience cannot, therefore, be regarded as nullified by the general lack of experience. Unless it be tacitly assumed that miracles are intrinsically improbable under any and all conditions, testimony may conceivably establish a balance in their favor. The assumption in question, however, is something which has never been established, and is always put to flight before the thought of a Divine Person who holds a free relation to nature. Still, the virtue of testimony is by no means such as to be independent of all conditions. No divine act can contradict divine righteousness. By the verdict of the Bible, no impure wonder-

worker has any claim to credence. All marvels, in proportion as they are not plainly linked with holy ends, are properly subject to doubt, while those which are discovered to be antagonistic to moral interests are but lying wonders, products of human or diabolical fraud. In general, it may be affirmed that an increased demand is placed upon testimony in the measure that any supposed case of miracles fails to meet either of the other two tests.

If, now, we apply our tests to the gospel miracles, it will not take long to determine that the first two are, in general, fully satisfied by these events. They are consistent with the divine holiness. They manifest divine love and compassion. They enter as congruous elements into the most perfect life that was ever lived among men. They stand in natural relation to the pure and lofty teaching of Christ ; indeed, the two are so intimately linked, in many cases, that a separation is impossible without a grievous mutilation of the evangelical narrative. The gospel miracles exhibit, also, the fitting measure of spiritual potency. Through their harmonious relation to the person and message of Christ they are made permanently edifying, awakening, and consoling to the human spirit. They are a veritable factor in the spiritual life of men, and must remain so as long as the gospel has any power in the world.

An examination of the testimony which vouches for the gospel miracles will likewise indicate that they do not lack the needful basis. That this testimony cannot easily be dislodged is shown, in the first place, by the failure of the cardinal attempts to construe the life of Christ while putting a negative upon His miracles. The attempt of Paulus to eliminate all supernatural elements from the Gospels by pronouncing them honest but uncritical interpretations of natural events has long since been condemned as artificial. It also impinges upon the explicit testimony of Christ, contained in passages that have as distinctive marks of genuineness as any that are on record, such, for example, as the reply which was made to the

messengers sent by John the Baptist.[1] This is so thoroughly in the style and spirit of Jesus that he who puts it aside goes far toward removing all historic ground from under his feet, and needs to ponder by what magic a story of such beauty, symmetry, and life-like reality as is that of Christ's ministry ever came to be fashioned. Scarcely more successful is the mythical theory of Strauss. This assumes that, by a gradual process, expectations respecting the office of the Messiah, which had been instilled into the popular mind, were unconsciously objectified, and took on the garb of a miraculous history. But if these expectations that the Messiah would work miracles were so vital a thing, how did it happen that Jesus obtained any recognition as the Messiah if no miracles were wrought by Him? How did the people so completely triumph over the chill of disappointment as to put in place of a dismal blank a glowing account of miraculous deeds? Moreover, the theory of Strauss, equally with that of Paulus, overrides passages in the Gospels which have as clear marks of genuineness as any that can be selected, and so logically issues in a helpless nihilism, the vapid conclusion that nothing is known of the historical character who produced the mightiest effects that ever emanated from a single life. The shortcomings of his theory were not wholly hid from Strauss himself, and ultimately he revised it by giving considerable scope to the hypothesis of invented reports. An hypothesis still more violent appears with Renan. Stripped of its rhetorical gloss, Renan's expedient for blotting out the record of miracles is the sacrifice of the moral integrity of Jesus. Not able to close his eyes to the fact that Jesus sanctioned belief in the reputed miracles, he concludes that He accommodated Himself to the unwelcome demand enforced by popular delusion, and took up the rôle of a half-hearted wonder-worker. Thus the unsparing censor of every covert form of wickedness, the one

[1] Luke vii. 19–23.

who denounced sin without respect of persons, the teacher whose words and example have ceaseless power to vitalize conscience and to persuade to holiness, descended to unworthy thaumaturgic arts! A speculative antipathy to the supernatural which flies to this extreme of the unnatural has sufficiently judged itself in the sight of all sober minds.

The original theory of Strauss supposes the stories of miracles to have sprung up beyond the circle of the primitive disciples. But there are good reasons for deeming this supposition utterly unhistorical, and for regarding the primitive disciples as witnesses for the miraculous deeds of their Master, as they were, undoubtedly, for His resurrection. Every argument for the Johannine authorship of the fourth Gospel makes of course for this conclusion. As regards the Synoptical Gospels the unmistakable tendency of recent criticism is to affirm that their groundwork was furnished at least in large part with the knowledge and coöperation of the primitive disciples. According to a widely current theory, Mark's Gospel served as an important factor in the basis of the Gospels by Matthew and Luke. Now, an early and credible tradition represents that Mark stood in close relation with Peter and depended largely upon his testimony. It is concluded, moreover, that both our canonical Matthew and Luke made use of a document which may be identified with the Logia of the Apostle Matthew, written originally in Hebrew or Aramaic. It is true that this document is supposed to have been occupied mainly with Christ's discourses. But, then, various of these discourses were so connected with miracles that they could not be reported intelligibly without reference to them. Thus the literary criticism of the Gospels gives good reason for assuming that these writings, as we have them, exhibit in their reports of Christ's miracles substantially the fruit of apostolic testimony. The sobriety also with which they treat the subject of miracles argues not a little for an apostolic basis. Their tone is harmonious with the supposition that the report

of judicial eye-witnesses was back of their narratives. That their composition was not dominated by a greed for the marvellous is seen in the fact that not a single miracle is ascribed to John the Baptist, and not less by the fact that the canonical Gospels, in striking contrast with the spurious Gospels of a later date, ascribe no miracles to the youth or early manhood of Jesus, but make all His miracles incidental to His public ministry. The evidence contained in the New Testament Epistles is, moreover, fully consonant with the verdict that apostolic testimony was distinctively the basis for the reports of the gospel miracles. The Epistle to the Hebrews, written at all events within the first century, and very likely before the year 70, assumes that the preaching of the gospel was accompanied by miraculous attestations.[1] Paul testifies to the same effect in more than one instance.[2] As appears from his language,[3] as well as from the Book of Acts, the apostolic miracles were regarded as wrought by the virtue of Christ. Now it is not natural to suppose that the very men who claimed to be working miracles in the name of Christ believed themselves to be doing an order of works in confirmation of His gospel which He had never done Himself. The whole New Testament picture contradicts such a supposition. The words which Peter is reported to have spoken on the day of Pentecost, when he described Jesus as a man "approved of God by mighty works and signs and wonders," give the only credible representation of the apostolic standpoint. The eye-witnesses of Christ's deeds, His daily companions and associates during the years of His ministry, the men whose sterling good sense prepared them for the difficult enterprise of founding the Church, and whose intensity of honest conviction furnished them for the painful ordeal of martyrdom, appear as the responsible vouchers for the gospel miracles. To ask for

[1] Hebrews ii. 3, 4.

[2] Gal. iii. 5; Rom. xv. 18–20; 1 Cor. xii. 28, 29; 2 Cor. xii. 12.

[3] Rom. xv. 18.

more competent testimony would savor at once of caprice and ingratitude.

As regards the Old Testament miracles, our threefold test is not so distinctly applicable. Prophecy is undoubtedly a more convincing credential for the older dispensation than is miracle. Nevertheless, the great events which are reported to have brought about the deliverance of the Israelites from Egyptian bondage meet in a fair measure the tests of genuine miracles. To make Israel a subject of special tuition, a priestly nation, and so ultimately a medium of blessing to the whole world, was an end worthy of divine benevolence and wisdom. The supernatural intervention had also a suitable result. It was spiritually potent, a vital factor in Israelitish piety through the ensuing ages. As to the testimony for the miracles which led up to and accompanied the exodus, the uncertain date of various portions of the Pentateuch hinders a confident appeal to eye-witnesses, and the actual power of the alleged wonders in the national consciousness remains their most authentic certificate. For the later miracles of the Old Testament somewhat less can be said. To rescue the nation from threatened apostasy and thus to conserve its high vocation may have been, indeed, a sufficient occasion for miraculous intervention. Some of the recorded miracles too have a very worthy setting, as, for example, the attestation which crowned Elijah's great contest with the priests of Baal. But this can scarcely be said for all of them. In respect of a considerable proportion, also, it is not clearly apparent that they meet the test of nobility and permanency of spiritual effect. Instead, therefore, of rendering any positive support to biblical authority, they need rather to be supported by that authority, if they are to hold an indubitable place in the category of facts.

The concession that some of the miracles recorded in the Bible are not adapted to render any positive help to a rational faith in revelation does not of course invalidate the evidence from miracle. In the gospel miracles, as we have seen, the

highest tests of genuineness are grandly met. They are also relatively satisfied in the extraordinary events which raised Israel from an estate of slavery into the position of the Lord's elect people. The record of miracles joins therefore with that of prophecy in attesting the presence of a divine element within the circle of the biblical system.

The objection which may be drawn from the facile multiplication of stories of miracles in the annals of reputed saints is to be answered by a reference to the tests which have been laid down. In general, these alleged miracles fail utterly to meet the first two tests. Many of them are mere eccentricities and demean the notion of the divine administration. While they may have fulfilled a certain office for ignorance and superstition, they can make no claim to true spiritual potency. The whole mass of them could be blotted out of religious literature without eclipsing any real light in the spiritual firmament. Indeed, it would be a clear gain if the contemplation which is absorbed in them could be carried over to the loftier and more healthful region of the beautiful and gracious works of Christ. A heavy burden is thus thrown upon the testimony in their behalf, and as this is very often quite unsubstantial, the cases of well attested miracles proper — as distinguished from striking though natural instances of healing through the reaction of the mind upon the body — are far from numerous. In general, it may be said that the ecclesiastical miracles are an appendix to the apocryphal rather than to the canonical Gospels, and, like the former, serve by contrast to emphasize the sobriety, reasonableness, and simple majesty of the genuine evangelical narratives.[1]

[1] Compare Charles W. Rishell, The Foundations of the Christian Faith, 1899, pp. 259–264.

VIII. — The Subjective Proof, or the Evidence Furnished by the Christian Consciousness.

With the more objective credentials of the biblical revelation we may join the subjective proof — the ineffaceable impression of truth and authority which the Bible makes in the Christian consciousness. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries this evidence was styled the *testimonium Spiritus Sancti*, and was regarded very commonly as the crowning proof of revelation. A more fitting name for the evidence might doubtless have been chosen, since the operation of the Holy Spirit in producing faith in the Bible is not a subject for direct insight. It is more prudent, therefore, to appeal to the common facts of the Christian consciousness, or inward experience, than to the act of an unseen agent which is inferred rather than immediately perceived.

To those who stand outside the circle of an inner appropriation of Christianity the argument from Christian experience may not be very convincing. It remains nevertheless a great fact that the claim of the Bible to be the book of salvation is in such perfect accord with the experience of innumerable believers, who find along the lines of biblical truth the most salutary self-discovery, the purest consolation, the deepest peace, and the most ennobling incentives which come into their lives. That which is thus fruitful of the highest and best may reasonably be regarded as peculiarly rich in divine treasure. Coleridge spoke soberly when he said: "In the Bible there is more that finds me than I have experienced in all other books put together; the words of the Bible find me at greater depths of my being; and whatever thus finds me brings with it an irresistible evidence of its having proceeded from the Holy Spirit."

This argument, it may be noticed, approves the distinctive teachings of the Bible as worthy of a divine source, rather than affords a ground of judging all its parts and items. As

Mead appropriately remarks: "A Christian man will find in the Scriptures as a whole a spirit which seems to him to be of divine origin. His own spirit, illumed by the Divine Spirit, will discern in the Scriptures the marks of a superhuman influence that must have been concerned in the production of them. He will be conscious of a peculiar stimulus and illumination as coming from the contents of the Bible. But no religious experience can go to the length of enabling a man to recognize the divine inspiration and authority of every part of the biblical books." [1]

The objection that, inasmuch as Christian experience or the facts of Christian consciousness are founded on the Bible, the correspondence between the two is accounted for as being in the line of natural causation, and therefore is not of evidential force, neglects important features of the case. It is not merely the truth of some general correspondence that has to be noted here; the high order of the facts of Christian consciousness and the extent to which they harmonize with fundamental teachings of revelation come into consideration. As a natural result of interaction *something* in the way of correspondence between oracles and life may subsist in an ethnic system; but this does not prevent the *high plane of fact and correspondence* belonging to Christian experience and truth from being specially significant. A token is legitimately found here that the Bible fundamentally corresponds to man's ethical and religious nature and needs.

IX. — The Evidence based on a Comparative View of Sacred Books.

Fair-minded and competent scholarship will not deny that truth of a high order is contained in the written oracles of Zoroastrianism, Confucianism, Taoism, Buddhism, Hinduism,

[1] Supernatural Revelation, p. 321.

and Mohammedanism severally. At the same time, scholarship of this stamp will grant that a distinct primacy among sacred books belongs to the Christian's Bible. The detailed proof of this proposition will not, of course, be expected here. Only the comprehensive treatise on the subject of religions can render that proof. A brief statement of three or four significant points is the most that can appropriately be admitted.

1. The best that is contained in any body or group of ethnic scriptures can easily be matched from the content of the Bible. The earnest spirit in which Zoroastrianism deals with the antithesis between good and evil, the stress of Confucianism upon filial piety and upon just dealing between man and man, Lao-tse's emphasis upon the supreme reason and the life inwardly conformed thereto, the benevolence, humaneness, and resignation inculcated by Buddhism, the warm appreciation of the divine immanence which appears at various points in Brahmanic or Hindu thinking, the majesty with which the Koran invests the sovereignty of God, and its strenuous insistence upon the duty of complete surrender — all of these have their parallel in the Bible to such an extent that it cannot fairly be charged with a deficit as respects any one of them.

2. In the ethnic scriptures, as a body, the gold of moral and religious truth is combined with a much greater mass of comparatively worthless material than is to be found in the Bible. While the latter, especially in its Old Testament division, contains sections which are intrinsically of no great significance, and which acquire import only as it is transferred to them by the religious mind out of the wealth of its own ideas and associations, relatively it runs on a high plane, and is replete with an edifying content.

3. The Bible is distinguished among all sacred books by its rounded presentation of truth.[1] Herein lies its peculiar pre-

[1] A partial illustration of this fact has been given in Section IV of this chapter.

eminence. It does not sacrifice any high interest or truth by exclusive or exaggerated attention to a competing interest or truth. It respects proportion, and provides for the organic relation of part with part. While it exalts the obligation of divine law, it magnifies the depths of divine mercy. While it opens up an entrancing view of the life beyond, it does not neglect to enforce the duty of bringing the kingdom of heaven into this world. It profoundly emphasizes the ethical, and also profoundly emphasizes the specifically religious. The thought of sacrificing the one to the other lies wholly outside its domain. It is distant by a whole diameter from the Brahmanic sentiment expressed in this sentence: "No guilt taints a Brâhmana who possesses learning, practices austerities, and daily mutters sacred texts, though he may constantly commit sinful acts."[1] Equally remote is it from the pale regard of Confucianism for the thought of God, and from the ignoring of the divine which was characteristic of original Buddhism. As strenuous on the side of ethics as is either of these systems at the best, it provides for the vitalizing of ethical conviction by its powerful inculcation of the thought of a perfect Being, and of man's intimate relation to Him. It at once safeguards religion against ceremonialism and artificiality by its stress upon the ethical, and deepens ethical life by the inspiration which comes from high religious points of view. A more perfect or a more important harmony was never witnessed than that consummated through the union of the ethical and the religious in the spirit and the teaching of the New Testament.

4. The Bible has an advantage over all the ethnic scriptures in the manner in which its system of truth is focused in a lofty personality. The historical demonstration of spiritual verities, in and through Jesus Christ, provides a ground of conviction and hope more substantial and efficacious by far than is offered

[1] Sacred Books of the East, American edition, Vol. II, Part II, p. 129.

in any non-Christian system. In the legendary attachments to Buddhism, it is true, great import is awarded to the personality of Gautama. But it was no part of his own thought that men should inhere in him as the branch in the vine, and on the plane of authentic history there is no claim that the spiritual kingdom is focused in the Buddhistic sage after the manner in which the Gospels represent it to be focused in Him who bore the name of the Son of God as well as that of the Son of Man.

It is doubtless possible for an objector to insinuate here the notion that this superiority of the Bible falls short of accrediting it as containing the ultimate system of truth. The plea may be made that the Bible simply represents, among the transient phases of the evolution of religion, the one which has happened to be favored with the best conditions. It will be time, however, to concede any weight to this plea when the race, or some part of it, shall appear to have gained a better level of ethical and religious principles than was characteristic of the illuminated consciousness of Jesus Christ. What must strike the clear-sighted student of history is the exceeding difficulty, on the part even of elect souls, to keep up to the level of gospel truth in the whole circle of their ethical and religious thinking.

X. — The Proper Limits of the Bible, or the Tests of Canonicity.

A glance at the various evidences that have been adduced will serve, it is believed, to foster the impression that the proof for the Bible lies in its contents — that is, in the spiritual wealth of the factors which it contains, and in their harmonious relation to each other — rather than in any form of external attestation. Even the miracle, as has been seen, is most appropriately regarded as a part of the rounded whole of revela-

tion. Whatever it may have been to the contemporary generation, for us it is adapted to establish conviction in the biblical system only as it fulfills a function of revelation, only as it is harmoniously connected with the process of sacred history, and serves to disclose the character of God or to illustrate His redemptive purpose. Outside of this relation and office, it does not generate faith in the Bible, but rather needs an already existing faith to provide for its acceptance.

From this general point of view it is not difficult to discover what ought to be the dominant consideration in settling the canon. The prime test of the canonical character of any book must be found in its contents. It may fairly be expected of an approved book that its contents should be, at least very largely, in harmonious relation with the system of revelation contained in the Bible as a whole, and should, moreover, either directly or indirectly, make some contribution to the completeness of that system, a vain duplication being contrary to the principle of economy.

A secondary test of the canonical character of a book may be located in the consensus of opinion, as being for or against its claims. This must be reckoned subsidiary to the foregoing, since a consensus of opinion can have real weight only in proportion to the legitimacy of the grounds on which it rests. In so far as it is determined by arbitrary authority, by the mere desire for personal or corporate convenience, or by an indolent assent to custom and tradition, it lacks conclusiveness. Its reliability is measured by the amount of scholarship and piety which enter into its basis. Scholarship and piety united, and continuously rendering a concordant verdict, deserve much credence. But neither scholarship nor piety can properly be satisfied with anything artificial. To both it must appear that the contents of a book which rightfully claims a place in the Bible are agreeable to the high level and holy purpose of the biblical revelation as a whole. Thus an analysis of the grounds

which give real authority to a consensus of opinion takes us back to our primary test. The fact of a consensus, taken by itself, is simply a token, not a complete proof, that a book has the character which entitles it to a place in the canon.

It may be thought that a ground of judgment can be found in the relation of men of prophetic or apostolic vocation to the books of the Bible. But this test cannot be satisfactorily applied to the whole area of revelation. There are important portions of the Bible which are not known to have emanated from either prophet or apostle; nor can it be proved that they were reviewed and distinctly sanctioned by the one or the other. Two at least of the Gospels, the Book of Acts, the Epistle to the Hebrews, and considerable portions of the Old Testament fall under this description.

From these premises it seems to follow that a perfectly definite standard of canonicity is not within our reach. This is to be granted. There is no help for a margin of indefiniteness, so long as the figment of ecclesiastical infallibility is repudiated. For, it is quite certain that no specific act of divine authority can be pointed out as fixing either the Old or the New Testament canon. The right of some of the constituents of the New Testament to a place in the canon was an open question in Catholic Christendom for two centuries or more; and though the limits of the Old Testament were in all likelihood practically fixed in Jewish thought a century before the coming of Christ, at least as regards the acceptance of those books that are now universally received by the Christian Church, discussion of the subject was not reckoned impertinent for some time longer. In either case there was evidently an utter lack of consciousness that any unmistakable sign or decree from God had determined the matter. It is true that a general guarantee for the Old Testament is contained in the New. The references of Christ and the apostles show that they viewed the oracles of the older dispensation as containing authentic antecedents of the new, but these references can-

not be regarded as involving a decisive judgment on each and every subordinate part of the Old Testament.

The books in the accepted Hebrew canon which are most exposed to doubt are Esther, Ecclesiastes, and the Song of Solomon. That these books are not quoted in the New Testament need not be greatly emphazied. The fact is indeed well-nigh exceptional.[1] But this may imply nothing more than that the subject-matter of these books was not such as naturally to be suggestive to the New Testament writers. It is not necessary, likewise, to take much account of the indications that these books were anciently subject to a measure of suspicion. There was some doubt respecting all three of them in Jewish circles. Among the early Christians, the Book of Esther was challenged or ignored by several writers. It does not appear in Melito's list of Old Testament books, which was composed about the year 170. Athanasius classed it among uncanonical writings, and other theologians of the fourth century, such as Gregory Nazianzen and Amphilochius, omitted it from their lists. The same may be said of Leontius in the fifth century. Nicephorus in the ninth century included it with books of doubtful claim.[2] This makes an appreciable amount of exception; but still it is not necessarily regarded as very formidable. The greatest difficulty with this, as with the other books in question, is in the contents. Some of the items in the Book of Esther border upon the incredible, and the feeling with which it is charged seems to pass beyond the permissible measure of patriotic fervor into a fanatical animosity towards the enemies of the Jews and an intemperate glorification of the position and importance of the latter within the Persian

[1] While it is true that Obadiah, Nahum, Ezra and Nehemiah are not quoted, the first two are indirectly recognized, since the twelve minor prophets were anciently reckoned as one book. As for Ezra and Nehemiah they are thought to have made primarily one book with the Chronicles, and in the apostolic age were probably so closely associated therewith that the recognition of the last implied their acceptance.

[2] Ryle, The Canon of the Old Testament.

empire.[1] Ecclesiastes has a pessimistic trend that is not only contrary to the tone of the New Testament, but also contrary to the persistent hopefulness of the Hebrew prophets. Only on the supposition that it was designed to sketch human life from a special standpoint, namely, from the standpoint of the disappointment and weariness naturally induced by a career of luxury and worldliness, like that of the unfaithful Solomon, can its tone be justified. The Book of Ecclesiastes, it must be granted, does not itself thus limit the import of the picture which it sets forth. However, the interpreter is not forbidden to take it as representative of a special mood, and in so doing can find it to some extent a book of edification. As respects the Song of Solomon, the objection is the lack of any religious significance in its contents. Such a significance has indeed been invented for the poem. Through the drapery of its fervid phrases there has been discovered the love of Jehovah

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[1] It makes an unpleasant impression to observe that "The little ones and women" of the opponents of the Jews were made lawful objects of destruction in the decree written apparently according to the wish and under the dictation of Mordecai. (Esther viii. 7–11.) Scarcely more pleasing is the record that Esther was not satisfied with one day's slaughter in Shushan, but requested of the king a second harvest of human heads. (ix. 12–15.) The candid reader can hardly fail to yield assent to this verdict: "If the details are correct, this only goes to enhance the moral difficulties of the book. The fierce Jewish vindictiveness, which slaughters thousands of innocent people in so-called self-defense, breaks out into an aftermath of unnecessary carnage." (R. F. Horton, Revelation and the Bible, p. 208.) It has indeed been alleged that the slaughter was necessary to conserve the existence of the chosen people. But the plea is not convincing. Under all natural conditions the perpetration of so great a slaughter by a small minority in a great empire would, by reason of the burning resentment evoked, have been a sure guarantee of the extermination of that minority. If it be presumed that a supernatural awe came over the population of the empire to restrain their hand, it must be answered that an instrumentality of that kind would have had quite as easy a task to fulfill without the slaughter as with the same.

A judgment on the historical character of the book is given by A. H. Sayce in the following terms: "Only one conclusion seems possible: the story of Esther is an example of Jewish Haggadah which has been founded on one of those semi-historical tales of which the Persian Chronicles seem to be full." (The Higher Criticism and the Verdict of the Monuments, pp. 474, 475.)

for Israel or the relation of Christ to His Church. But it contradicts all biblical analogy and stands in the face of all psychological possibility to suppose that any Israelitish poet could have consciously used the luxuriant and sensuous imagery of these love-strains to illustrate divine relations. It is plainly a poem of human loves. It is beautiful, however, in its kind, and may not be out of place in the canon, especially if Ewald's theory can be sustained, that three characters rather than two are contemplated by the poem, and that the Shulamite, instead of responding to the much-wedded Solomon, is viewed as persisting in her attachment to a country lover.

It scarcely needs to be stated that Christian dogmatics would lose nothing by placing these books on the border of the canon, if not outside of the same. As the lack of any quotation from them in the New Testament implies, their subject-matter has very little significance for Christian doctrine. But while they are not needed for authority they may still subserve a useful purpose of a secondary kind, as supplying various texts which are not objectionable in themselves, and which have a certain value for religious feeling through the power of long-continued associations. This much, at any rate, may be said for Ecclesiastes and the Song of Solomon.

Objections quite as weighty as those which invite to a challenge of the proper canonicity of the book of Esther may be cited against a large part of the Old Testament Apocrypha. As respects the test of general acceptance, the latter, indeed, stand distinctly below the plane of the former. They never fairly won the acknowledgment of the Jews. In Palestine they were continuously excluded from the canon. In Egypt the Jews, for an interval, gave them a semi-canonical standing, and included them with the older books in the Septuagint version; but later they seem to have reverted to the position of their brethren in Palestine.[1] The early Christians, as heirs

[1] Riehm, Einleitung, II. 375.

to the Septuagint version, naturally took its full list of books, and drew no definite line of distinction between the Apocrypha and the strict Hebrew canon. But investigation ultimately had its effect, and the Greek fathers of the fourth and fifth centuries generally excluded the entire Apocrypha, except the little Book of Baruch and the Epistle of Jeremiah. In the Latin Church, the precipitate judgment of Augustine and some of the Roman bishops started a current in favor of the Apocryphal books, which finally issued, at the Council of Trent, in the sixteenth century, in the distinct assertion of their full canonical worth. In the interim, however, a succession of scholars had rendered a contrary verdict. Jerome discriminated against the Apocrypha. The same position was taken by Bede and Alcuin in the eighth century, by Rabanus Maurus in the ninth, by Peter of Cluny, Hugo and Richard of St. Victor, Rupert of Deutz, and John of Salisbury in the twelfth, by Hugo of St. Caro in the thirteenth, by Nicholas of Lyra in the fourteenth, by Antonius, Archbishop of Florence, in the fifteenth, by Cardinal Ximenes, Cardinal Cajetan, Pico of Mirandola, and others, in the sixteenth.[1] The judgment of Protestants was adverse, from the first, to conceding unqualified canonicity to the Apocrypha. A large score of distrust and rejection thus stands against the apocryphal books of the Old Testament. And in the case of most of them this is abundantly justified by their contents. Tobit, though containing an interesting story, pays altogether too much tribute to superstitious magic,[2] and to the atoning virtue of almsgiving.[3] It also palliates mendacity by putting falsehoods into the mouth of the angel, who acts as one of the chief characters.[4] Judith is a romance, which deals fantastically with history and geography,[5] and is occupied with the celebra-

[1] Riehm, Einleitung, II. 391, 392.

[2] Tobit iii. 8, vi. 8, 16 [19], viii. 3, xi. 4, 8.

[3] Tobit iv. 10, xii. 9.

[4] Tobit v. 6 [8], 12 [18].

[5] Eichhorn, Einleitung in die Apocryphischen Schriften; Bissel, Commentary on the Apocrypha of the Old Testament. Sayce says: "The decipher-

tion of a deed of treacherous vengeance — a celebration not wholly unlike some passages in the Book of Judges, but expressive rather of the crudest ethics of the Old Testament than of its best standard. The additions to the Book of Daniel are very poor specimens of historical invention. The formal prayer and psalm put into the mouths of the Hebrews in the fiery furnace are incongruous with their intense situation. The story of Susanna stands in very artificial relation to the Book of Daniel, and contains, among other uncritical items, the assumption that the Jews at Babylon were free, in the early years of their captivity, to exercise the power of life and death. The reputed history of Bel and the great dragon is a crude fable, which caps the climax of superstition and absurdity by picturing the prophet Habakkuk as being lifted up by the hair of his head, and transported through the air from Judæa to Babylon, in order that he might be made to present to the hungry Daniel, in the den of lions, the food which he was about to take to some reapers in the field. The Book of Baruch is loose in its historical references, misplacing the era of the return of the sacred vessels belonging to the temple, and inconsistently speaking of offerings being still made in the ruined temple at Jerusalem. In its general contents the book is unobjectionable, but, as being little else than a compilation from other Old Testament books, it contributes nothing of real value to the canon. The Epistle of Jeremiah, which is given in the Vulgate as the sixth chapter of Baruch, represents another late attempt to fill out the history relating to the captivity. Its elaborate cautions against Babylonian idolatry are artificial and jejune as compared with the authentic words of Jeremiah. In Ecclesiasticus and the Book of Wisdom we have writings that come nearer to the level of canonical worth.

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ment of the cuneiform inscriptions has finally destroyed all claim on the part of the Books of Tobit and Judith to be considered as history, and has banished them to the realm of Haggadah." (The Higher Criticism and the Verdict of the Monuments.)

Both of them occasionally pass the limits of sobriety, or indulge in questionable statements,[1] but in the main they are not unworthy specimens of the wisdom literature. Were not that literature so adequately represented in the Old Testament, apart from them, their admission to the canon, though still of doubtful propriety, would not be vetoed by the most of their contents. The First Book of Maccabees is a respectable history of a great crisis in the fortunes of the Jewish nation. However, its multiplication of military details, far beyond the demands of religious edification, is in contrast with the prophetical handling of history. The book has also its quota of palpable errors, especially in its references to the affairs of outside nations.[2] The Second Book of Maccabees is noticeably inferior to the first. The rather pedantic self-consciousness which is manifested by its author is not in the best taste,[3] and his repeated introduction of heavenly combatants to the field of battle[4] is a palpable extravagance, even when compared with the contents of the very fervid narrative in the First Book of Maccabees. On the whole, it may be said that there are only three of the apochryphal books that, in virtue of their contents, have any claim to a place in the canon: and these three, namely, Wisdom, Ecclesiasticus, and the First Book of Maccabees, can more properly be included in an appendix to the Old Testament than within its acknowledged limits. In the New Testament none of these books are directly cited or used for confirmation of doctrine, though it has been supposed that the Epistle of James shows the influence of Ecclesiasticus, and that, in the Epistle to the Hebrews and a few other books, a rhetorical or illustrative use is made of items

[1] Wisdom viii. 20, x. 15, xiv. 27, xvi. 20, xviii. 15–17, 24. Ecclesiasticus iii. 30 [33], vii. 23 [25], 24 [26], viii. 12 [15], xii. 5, 10–12, xxv. 7 [9], xxx. 6, xxxi. 27 [32, 33], xxxii. 6 [7], xlii. 5, xlvii. 3. The numbers in brackets are for the Douay version.

[2] 1 Maccabees i. 6, viii. 7, 8, 16.

[3] 2 Maccabees ii. 26–32, xv. 38 [39], 39 [40].

[4] 2 Maccabees iii. 24–27, v. 2, 3, x. 29, 30, xi. 8.

derived from the Apocrypha. The Epistle of Jude, in quoting the Book of Enoch, furnishes a solitary instance in the New Testament of a direct reference to an extra-canonical production.[1]

The subject of the New Testament canon affords very little ground for discussion. Most of the questions of authorship which have been raised have not been regarded as vitally affecting titles to canonicity. From the first inception of the canon, soon after the middle of the second century, Catholic Christians have been substantially agreed upon the books which may be regarded as constituting the organism of New Testament truth. For a time, it is true, there was a partial challenge of the Apocalypse in the East and considerable doubt respecting the Epistle to the Hebrews in the West; but ere long the Church became united in accepting both of these books, and no later generation has had any disposition to revise its verdict. The brevity of a few of the Epistles (Philemon, 2 John, and 3 John) and their relatively indifferent contents naturally caused very scanty reference to them by early Christian writers. This lack of external support, however, has not occasioned any serious objection to them. Among recent critics a measure of doubt has been expressed as to the apostolic authorship of the Epistle of Jude. In the case of the Epistle of James, a large proportion of scholars have acknowledged, in the internal marks of genuineness which it exhibits, a compensation for paucity of external evidences, and Luther's impatience with the epistle has found scarcely an echo. Doubtless Luther's keen instinct was not at fault in the dis-

[1] From our point of view, the discussion of the apocryphal additions to the Book of Esther is of minor concern. They are subject to criticism, however, as having every appearance of being additions, and, at that, not fully congruous with the original contents of the book. First and Second Esdras (otherwise named Third and Fourth Esdras, as being put in line with Ezra and Nehemiah), and the Third Book of Maccabees, have little claim to notice in this connection. Even the Council of Trent left them out of its list.

covery that the Pauline doctrine of justification could not be elicited from this epistle. But if note be taken of the fact that an exposition of the doctrine of justification was not the principal intention of James, and that he approached the subject only to condemn an antinomian abuse of faith, his writing can be approved as useful and wholesome in its main trend, even though it does not give a well-rounded view of justification. The second Epistle of Peter is quite as lacking as that of James in the line of external evidence and is not favored with internal marks that are by any means conclusive for its Petrine origin. It is, therefore, more exposed to doubt than any other book in the New Testament canon. Until its claims are more clearly established, it cannot prudently be treated as an apostolic writing.

XI. — Questions of Authorship as Related to Biblical Authority.

Among the problems of authorship which have attracted much attention, those which relate to the books of the Old Testament cannot be regarded as vitally affecting the authority of the Bible in its general scope. The testimony of the Bible is not given so unequivocally to specific theories of the origin of these books that its general truthfulness and reliability depend upon their verification. Take for instance the much debated question of the authorship of the Pentateuch. Within the Pentateuch itself there is no assertion of the traditional theory that it was written in its entirety by Moses. The great lawgiver is indeed spoken of once and again as writing down various matters.[1] But these statements do not necessarily have reference to anything more than limited portions of the Pentateuch. This is clearly the case with most of the books. A

[1] Ex. xvii. 14, xxiv. 4, xxxiv. 27; Num. xxxiii. 2; Deut. xxxi. 9, 24.

long section of Deuteronomy (iv. 44–xxviii.), it is true, is occupied with what is described as Mosaic legislation. But it is to be noticed that Moses is said to have delivered orally to the people the contents of this legislation. As to who wrote the Book of Deuteronomy and incorporated into it the legislative section, no hint is given. This section, moreover, may very well be regarded as a rather free rendering of that which was understood to be included in the laws of Moses. Anyone who is suitably apprised of the freedom which antique authors claimed in reporting addresses from their heroes will find very slight occasion to conclude that the writer of this book meant it to be understood that he was giving a strict verbal reproduction of a Mosaic code. In a chapter lying beyond the legislative section, Moses, it is true, is said to have written out his laws (xxxi. 9, 24). But that is no statement that he personally incorporated them with the writing which we call Deuteronomy. Neither is it a statement that the writer of this book made a verbatim copy of those laws.[1] What Deuteronomy really presents is a history in which Moses figures as chief actor and speaker. It makes absolutely no affirmation respecting the composer of the history.

If we turn to the New Testament, we find nothing more pronounced on the authorship of the Pentateuch than a simple compliance with current phraseology.[2] In the time of Christ and the apostles it was customary to style one of the main divisions of the Old Testament the Law, or more specifically the Law of Moses. This had the force of a stereotyped expres-

[1] Account should be taken of the varied range of meaning which Jewish usage assigned to "the law." It might denote the extended code, or the brief compendium giving only the more important constituents of the code. "According to Deut. xxvii. 8, 'all the words of this law' are to be written on the plastered stones of Mount Ebal; and here, as Calvin points out, we can only understand the sum and substance of the law." (W. Robertson Smith, The Old Testament in the Jewish Church, p. 332.)

[2] Mark xii. 26; Luke xvi. 31, xxiv. 44; John i. 17, v. 45, 46, vii. 19; Acts iii. 22, xxvi. 22, xxviii. 23; Rom. x. 5; 2 Cor. iii. 15.

sion, and was as naturally used to designate what we call the Pentateuch, as the term "Gospels" is now used to point out the collection of the lives of Christ in the new Testament. The expression, "the Law of Moses," may have been too specific to fit the precise facts of history. But if Moses was really the organizer of the Israelitish nation and gave the groundwork of its laws, it had a relative truth. Now is it reasonable to ask that Christ should have selected a new name for the first division of the Old Testament, when the one in actual use had at least a relative justification? Would it have been a mark of discretion in Him to have rebuked the current terminology, and to have turned aside the attention of His hearers from great spiritual verities to a question of authorship? Surely in the swift course of His ministry, and in the face of weightier matters, there was no call for Him to complicate His work, and to forestall the natural course of scholarly investigation, by descending into the arena either of historical criticism or of scientific disputation.[1] Moreover, it is not altogether clear that the whole sum of historic facts was constantly present to His thought, so as to be able to shape His words. The constitutional relation of Christ to the divine is one thing; the habitual content of that consciousness in Him, which lay immediately back of His communication with the world, is another thing. It may be assumed that His unique relation to the divine enabled Him to know all that was in-

[1] "His life-work belonged to a realm which is immeasurably higher than that of human science. He saw the inner meaning of the world and of life, with whose details science is occupied. He penetrated to the heart of Old Testament truth and was oblivious of such questions as those of time, place, and date. Nature He looked upon as the revelation of the divine order and beneficence; He spoke often of her powers and processes, which were for His mind instinct with God; but He was not at all concerned to extend men's observation of natural phenomena, much less to correct the popular impressions concerning them. For him it was quite enough to teach men to see God in nature, as it was enough to show them the imperishable religious truths which formed the essential substance of Old Testament revelation." (Geo. B. Stevens, The Theology of the New Testament, p. 78.)

trinsically related to His vocation, without necessarily concluding that facts beyond that circle came within the range of his habitual outlook. This point of view, however, does not need to be insisted upon in the present connection. Christ's use of a current expression in referring to a main division of the Old Testament appears too plainly in the character of a natural accommodation to be regarded as involving, or designing to involve, a positive determination of a question of historical criticism.

If the Bible is not committed to a decisive verdict on the authorship of the Pentateuch, still less is it committed on the question of the unity of the Book of Isaiah. There is no testimony within the limits of the Old Testament that the last twenty-seven chapters were from the hand of the pre-exilian prophet who wrote the foregoing portion. The fact that the collector placed the two portions in juxtaposition is the sole item of responsibility which can be connected with the Old Testament for the opinion that they came from the same author. Nor does the New Testament approach any nearer to the rendering of a decision on the question of authorship. It simply represents the current mode of quotation. Even in the present, a full-fledged representative of the "higher criticism," in giving out a text from any part of the book, would speak of it as contained in such a chapter of the Prophecy of Isaiah, unless perchance he should be stocked overmuch with foolish pedantry. An equal license cannot reasonably be denied to those who wrote and spoke in the first century. So far as the value of the Book of Isaiah is concerned, it evidently matters little whether it came from one or from two great prophets.

Scarcely more of a critical intent is to be imputed to the New Testament reference to the prophet Daniel.[1] Whether the Book of Daniel in its present form was written by the dis-

[1] Matt. xxiv. 15; Mark xiii. 14.

tinguished exile at Babylon, or not, it contains vivid forecasts of the Messianic era; and it was in virtue of this element that the one citation which is recorded in the Gospels was made from it. That the expression cited is referred to the "prophet Daniel" is not necessarily regarded as meaning anything more than that it stands in the prophetical Book of Daniel, just as our citation of a gospel item as given by Matthew does not necessarily imply any intent to make special note of the writer, but only a purpose to distinguish a particular book from others of its class. No doubt the supposition that the impress of a later hand appears upon the Book of Daniel involves a certain forfeiture. It leaves us with a less distinct assurance that the narrative contains no traditionary variations from the historical facts. On the other hand, it must be conceded that it facilitates the explanation of the dramatic hue cast over the various historical scenes which are depicted. Contemporary history is not so naturally painted in this style as is that which is somewhat remote.

It is not necessary for dogmatic purposes to decide any one of these questions of authorship. The fact that the Bible is not so definitely committed to one theory or another that its authority is put in hazard by a special turn of criticism is the truth that is to be specially emphasized. As a matter of simple opinion, however, we venture to say that the industrious effort which has been made to conserve the traditional theories cannot be regarded as highly successful. A plausible or semi-plausible answer is indeed made to many of the objections. But the grounds for doubt are not thereby dissipated. The piecemeal defense does not fully offset the force of concurring lines of opposing evidence. In the light of facts which have been brought into view, scholarly judgment will continue to find serious obstacles to accepting the Mosaic authorship of the entire Pentateuch, the unity of the Book of Isaiah, and the preparation of the Book of Daniel in its present form so far back as the time of the Babylonish captivity.

Even were one to hold the traditional views on these topics, it would be the reverse of discretion to build upon them as necessary foundations in the edifice of Christian faith.

As regards the New Testament books, the most important problem of authorship relates to the fourth Gospel. This Gospel is not, in strictness, anonymous. Neither can it be allowed that the author impersonates the Apostle John by an admissible literary device. Impersonation of a distinguished character was, indeed, no unheard of expedient among ancient writers. We have an example in the Book of Ecclesiastes, where the writer speaks in the name of Solomon. This does not imply, necessarily, any intention to deceive. It was a rhetorical device which, very likely, the reader was expected to see through, employed to enliven or to dignify the discourse. In the fourth Gospel we have something quite other than this literary contrivance. The author has employed language which has the force of an explicit testimony that he was one of the original disciples, and has given tokens which it is difficult to believe were not meant to identify that disciple with John.[1] If he was not John, we are confronted by the perplexing conclusion that the author of this deeply spiritual narrative of our Lord's ministry was guilty of intentional deception. Once assured of the thorough honesty of the writer, we could count it a matter of minor consequence whether an original disciple, or one who had enjoyed special intimacy with an original disciple, was that writer. But an indication of a breach of honesty on his part would leave us destitute of

[1] John i. 14, xix. 35, xxi. 20–24. The words of 1 John i. 1–4 come also into evidence, since it is the common verdict that the Gospel and the Epistle were from the same writer. The introductory words of the latter amount to a very explicit testimony that the writer was an eye-witness of Christ's ministry. If xxi. 24 be regarded as appended by another than the author of the Gospel, then indeed no formal claim of that author to identity with John or with one of the twelve appears; but his claim to have been an eye-witness remains, and criticism has very little motive to set aside John, in favor of any other eye-witness.

adequate guarantees for any points of history not supported by other evidence than his word. But happily it remains to be proved that we are under obligation to despoil ourselves of any treasure which the fourth Gospel contains by denying to it the character of a sincere narrative.

The external evidence for the Johannine authorship of this Gospel is by no means of inferior grade. Irenæus, according to his own conviction, was at only one remove from the apostle, having been in communication with Polycarp, who was a disciple of John.[1] He testifies explicitly that John published his Gospel while resident at Ephesus.[2] The whole body of Christians, from the days of Irenæus, with insignificant exceptions in the ranks of heretics, shared his conviction. Tatian, the disciple of Justin Martyr, used the fourth Gospel along with the others, in composing his Diatessaron or gospel harmony. There are clear indications in the writings of Justin Martyr that he was conversant with this Gospel. The effect of its perusal appears not only in the general cast of his Logos teaching, but also on various specific points.[3] In the writings of the Apostolic Fathers a strain of fourth-Gospel phraseology can be detected. This may be noticed in Polycarp, Barnabas, Hermas, Ignatius, as also in the Teaching of the Twelve Apostles.[4] Indeed, the probable traces of the Gospel reach back to the earliest writings that were subsequent to the supposed time of its composition by John, namely, the last decade of the first century. To bring its existence close up to this point is obviously to strengthen, if not to prove, the supposition that it came from the hand of the apostle. The external evidence is, in truth, as continuous as could reasonably be expected. Its force may not be demonstrative, but it supplies no inferior ground for a historical judgment.

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[1] Cont. Haer. III. 3. 4; Euseb., Hist. Eccl. V. 20.

[2] Cont. Haer. III. 1.

[3] See Purves, The Testimony of Justin Martyr to Early Christianity, Lecture V.

[4] Weiss, Einleitung, § 5.

A due rating of the internal evidence for the Johannine authorship of the fourth Gospel needs to be preceded by an explanation of the manifest contrast between it and the Synoptical Gospels. Until this contrast is accounted for, it remains a historical enigma that may easily excite scepticism as to the rise of the peculiar version of Christ's life within the circle of the primitive disciples. Is the required explanation at hand? It is believed that this question can be answered in the affirmative. In the first place, the contrast is measurably explained by the supplementary position which is held by the fourth Gospel. It may be incorrect to assume that it was a leading motive with John to fill out the narrative in those respects in which it was left incomplete by the other evangelists. The leading motive was rather an affectionate zeal for the person of Christ, and the desire to present a worthy view of His glory as the Son of God made truly incarnate. Still knowledge of the course and compass of the earlier narratives was naturally influential. It wrought, we may believe, as a secondary motive, and so directed the choice of subject-matter as to make the fourth Gospel, in fact, very largely supplementary to the others, or distinguished by the introduction of new scenes and discourses. Again, the contrast between this Gospel and the first three may be explained to some extent by the near relation of John to the Master. He belonged to the inner group of the apostles, and was the only one of that group who can be supposed to have furnished at first hand an extended account of Christ's ministry. It is indeed presumed that Peter stood in close relation to the second Gospel, but there is no pledge that it has the precise color which it would bear had it come directly from his thought and recollection. A third and more important element in the explanation is the personality of John. From what we know of Paul it is difficult to imagine that, if he had been in condition to write a life of Christ, and had undertaken the task, he would have executed it in the style of the Synoptists. The force of his personality would

almost of necessity have projected into it a distinct Pauline tinge. Now the character of John may be supposed to have been similarly a potent factor in his writing. He is described as having been in his early manhood of the Boanerges type.[1] This gives us a hint that he was an intense personality. This intensity, softened but not cancelled by advancing years, and blending with somewhat of a bent to mysticism, would very naturally emerge into such distinct literary expression as appears in the fourth Gospel. This is the more credible because of the distance at which the evangelist stood from the events which he recorded. In proportion as the edge of verbal recollection had been dulled by the lapse of half a century or more, the Johannine personality would be the more free to effect the use of Johannine phraseology in reproducing the substance of Christ's discourses. Lastly, the environment of John in his closing years helps to explain some of the special characteristics of the fourth Gospel. According to an early and credible tradition, he dwelt at Ephesus, an important intellectual centre in that age. A weighty responsibility rested upon him for the administration and guidance of the Church. New forces began to work within the horizon of Christianity. Tendencies to adventurous speculation that threatened the integrity of gospel truth were manifest. The times called for an authoritative exposition of the person and teaching of Christ. What wonder that John, writing under these conditions, should blend a larger element of interpretation with the record of gospel facts than appears in the accounts of the Synoptists.

The peculiarity of the fourth Gospel being thus explained, full credit may be given to the internal evidences of its apostolic, or, what is the same thing in this relation, its Johannine authorship. In the first place it is worthy, in its high spiritual level, of the creative apostolic era, and stands in broad con-

[1] Mark iii. 17.

trast with the post-apostolic literature. Then it exhibits an exact acquaintance with Jewish rites and institutions, a precise knowledge of the topography of Palestine, a familiarity with many subordinate circumstances of gospel events, a confidence in reporting items of time and place, such as can be accounted for only in a resident of Palestine and a companion of Christ's ministry. None but an eye-witness of the things recounted could be expected to combine such unhesitating confidence, such mastery of details, and such accuracy on the points of fact which can be put to the test. Critics of different schools have been ready to claim that on various passages of Christ's life the fourth Gospel acts as a clarifying agent. It is judged, for example, to be in the right in its assignment of an early Judæan ministry to Christ and its assumption that the last supper anticipated the passover feast.[1]

Among the writings attributed to Paul, the Pastoral Epistles, especially First Timothy, have been most frequently challenged. Objection has also been made to the Pauline authorship of Colossians and Ephesians. Originally the Tübingen School, under the leadership of Baur, granted to Paul only Romans, Galatians, and the two Epistles to the Corinthians. But it has been found too much of a task to sustain this ultra position. The evident tendency in the modern critical school is to concede to Paul the Thessalonian Epistles, Philippians, and Philemon. It also renders a large measure of assent to the Pauline authorship of Colossians, and is less confident than formerly in taking exception to Ephesians. We conclude, then, that it involves no rashness to cite as apostolic writings ten of the epistles bearing the name of Paul. As regards the three Pastoral Epistles, it has to be granted that the amount of exception taken to their Pauline authorship abridges somewhat the practical force of an appeal to them. On the other hand, it is to be noticed that very eminent representatives of

[1] So Weiss, Wendt, Wetzel, Sanday, Rhees, and others.

New Testament criticism suppose an original Pauline base in these epistles, and affirm that their dogmatic background is unmistakably Pauline, only with some softening down in the direction of the early Catholic theology.[1] If we add to this the fact that reputable scholars are still of opinion that the judgment of the Church in assigning the Pastoral Epistles to Paul may be defended, it cannot seem to involve an arbitrary use of data to include these epistles in a general way among the sources of Pauline dogmatics. At the same time, it is a matter of prudence not to build very much on the apostolic authority of items in them which are not given, in substance, in the other epistles bearing the name of Paul.

XII. — Inspiration.

An interior divine agency auxiliary to the grasp and expression of truth, and therefore serving as a factor in the process of revelation, is what is meant by inspiration. Logically its consideration is subordinate to that of revelation. When we have been certified by an examination of the contents of the Bible and by the exhibition of its power over intellect, conscience, and affection, that it contains a revelation from God, and have used the general character of this revelation as a standard for judging the claims of those books which are most exposed to question, we are ready to welcome such an explanation of the exceptional dignity and worth of the Scriptures as is afforded by the idea of inspiration. It is the established fact of a revelation—that is, the fact of a worthy and credible manifestation of divine character, agency, and purpose — which invites to the supposition of inspiration, rather than the assumption of inspiration which certifies of the fact of revelation.

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[1] See Adolf Harnack, Die Chronologie der Altchristlichen Litteratur; H. J. Holtzmann, Lehrbuch der Neutestamentlichen Theologie.

This order of themes brings us naturally to the fit position for receiving the testimony of the Bible itself on the subject of inspiration. When the Bible has been approved by its contents and spiritual efficiency as containing a veritable revelation from God, its witness to the inspiration of its authors becomes at once a credible witness, at least as respects any book which appears to belong to the organism of revelation.

Biblical testimony to inspiration may be regarded as given in four different lines: (1) in the way in which the Old Testament is quoted or referred to in the New;[1] (2) in the promises of special divine assistance, for the discharge of their office, which Christ made to the apostles;[2] (3) in accounts of the fulfillment of these promises;[3] (4) in the claims of the apostles themselves.[4]

In estimating the force of this aggregate of testimonies, it is proper to take some account of the peculiarities of biblical phraseology. Anyone who is moderately acquainted with the Old Testament cannot have failed to notice that Hebrew piety was swift to refer all extraordinary gifts that subserved a good end, all talents and powers rising noticeably above the common level, to a divine source. In its view these things betokened the operation of the Spirit of God. Now this order of thought and expression naturally passed over in some measure to the New Testament writers since, through their training, they shared in the characteristic Hebrew consciousness. Their language, where the divine working is concerned, is often to be construed as the language of vivid, earnest, enthusiastic piety, rather than that of precise logical discourse. But, even when taken with this allowance, it leaves no doubt about the intent

[1] Matt. xxii. 29; Luke xvi. 17, 29–31, xxii. 37, xxiv. 27, 44; John x. 35; Acts iv. 25; 1 Cor. iv. 6; 2 Tim. iii. 15–17.

[2] Matt. x. 19, 20; Mark xiii. 11; Luke xii. 11, 12, xxi. 14, 15, xxiv. 49: John vii. 39, xiv. 16–18, 26, xv. 26, 27, xvi. 12–15, Acts i. 5, 8.

[3] Acts ii. 4, iv. 31, xiii. 2–4, xv. 28, xvi, 6, 7.

[4] Acts xv. 28; Rom. xv. 18, 19; 1 Cor. ii. 16, vii. 40, xiv. 37; 2 Cor. xiii. 3; Gal. i. 12; Eph. iii. 3; 1 Thess. ii. 13, iv. 15; 1 Pet. i. 12; 2 Pet. iii. 16.

of the Bible to recognize a veritable inspiration of those who served as the chief media for inculcating and transmitting the truths of revelation. In other words, biblical testimony, either directly or by the most obvious implications, clearly accentuates the fact of biblical inspiration, the fact that the Holy Spirit wrought in prophets and apostles in accordance with the demands of their vocation. The qualifying considerations which are due to the peculiarities of the religious dialect of the Bible do not so much compromise its testimony to the fact of inspiration as leave room for inquiry respecting the mode and measure. No precise determination of these points can be elicited from the biblical references to the subject. These may afford suggestions, but they do not provide complete data for a theory. To secure a well-grounded theory of inspiration we must pass beyond the biblical references, whether formal or implicit, and consider what is demanded by rational considerations in union with the aggregate of biblical facts.

Such a rational datum as the necessary activity of the mind in the appropriation of truth implies that inspiration does not suppress the use of the natural faculties in its subject, but rather carries them up to a higher stage of activity. To assume the passivity of the subject is to assume an artificial relation between him and his message; his function becomes that of a machine, and his message, when once given, would be as foreign to his own mind as to that of any other person. A Paul, for example, after writing an epistle, would need in the first place to be convinced that he had written it, and then would need to study it to become aware of its contents, and, unless its meaning could be readily apprehended by the natural faculties, he would need to be inspired anew to grasp its real import. This new inspiration, however, could not put him into conscious possession of that import if it did not leave him the constitutional activity of his faculties, such activity being an indispensable condition of all positive appropriation of truth. There is no way, accordingly, to an extraordinary

grasp of truth through inspiration, except as inspiration energizes rather than suppresses its subject. That is, inspiration must be dynamical rather than mechanical. Its office is to quicken intellect and emotion, and thus to prepare a subjective ground properly correspondent to the objective elements which enter into the process of revelation.

A glance at the Bible tends to confirm what the reason of the case thus dictates. In Old Testament prophesying, it is true, an afflatus had place, by which proper self-consciousness was overborne, and an experience of ecstacy or trance induced. But this was characteristic of a subordinate stage of prophesying. The great prophets of the Old Testament, who were the principal organs of revelation, seem to have had little share in this order of experience. As for the New Testament, while it makes reference to visions and ecstacies, it gives no hint, at least apart from the Apocalypse,[1] that its writers did not come to their subject-matter in the open day of proper self-consciousness, and in the active exercise of their faculties. Moreover, there is no natural explanation of the facts of biblical style, except on the supposition that the personalities of the sacred writers were present and active in their writing. Why should there be as many styles as writers, and these styles reflections of the personal characteristics and circumstances of the writers respectively, if they were mere passive instruments? The explanation that the Holy Spirit was pleased to use the style of the various persons employed as His penmen is much too forced to stand the test of reflection and criticism. It pushes accommodation to the point of absurdity, as making all the rhetorical imperfections, as well as the excellences of the scriptural writers, the product of the positive choice and agency of the Holy Spirit.

[1] The excepting of the Apocalypse, it is hardly necessary to state, is not meant to imply that it bears no tokens of conscious industrious elaboration. The reference here is directed simply to the fact that the writer presents his subject-matter in the form of a series of visions.

In the early part of the chapter it was noticed that the intellectual and moral limitations of men unfit them to be individually recipients and expounders of the whole circle of divine truth, and that, consequently, there was a necessity for educative expedients and for the use, in long succession, of different agents of revelation. In the present connection, the question naturally arises whether these limitations, besides circumscribing the subject-matter of individual writers, did not also, in some instances, induce errors either as to feeling or fact. It is quite conceivable that there might be such errors or inaccuracies, and still the authority of the Bible stand secure, because the general harmony of its contents, and the manner in which one writer supplements another, leave the reader, in the end, with a complete and self-consistent organism of religious truth. Now, on the theory which has just been advocated, namely, that inspiration is not to be regarded as suppressing the personality of the sacred writer, it would have to be accounted a great marvel if the Bible should appear to be characterized by complete inerrancy. How supremely difficult, for example, in a free, limited and imperfect man, to unite intensity of feeling with perfect judicial balance! What less would it have been than a continuous miracle, if the patriotic intensity of Israel, which was shared by the Old Testament writers, had never broken over the just bounds in reprobation of her opponents and spoilers? The palpable fact is, that it did break over the just bounds. There are sentences in the Psalms which are manifestly the expression of hot human passion. To attribute to divine inspiration such words as are contained in Psalms lviii. 10, cix. 10–12, and cxxxvii. 9, is to dishonor both God and the Bible for the sake of affirming the perfect agency of the Psalm-writers. In the light of the ultimate teaching of the Bible itself, they must be described as errors of feeling springing from human imperfection. And it is equally clear, from a comparison of one part of Scripture with another, that it contains some errors of

fact. Let the explanation be what it may, whether some resistance within the will of the writers to guidance, or an absence of complete guidance in comparatively unimportant matters, the errors are undeniable. Deuteronomy does not always agree with the preceding books of the Pentateuch.[1] The Books of Chronicles disagree in a number of subordinate items with those of Samuel and Kings,[2] not to mention how widely the idea which the Chronicler gives of the career of Solomon as a whole differs from that which is supplied by the earlier historian. Again, the account of an event in the historical books does not invariably accord fully with the reference to the same in the prophetical writings proper. For instance, the author of 2 Kings represents Jehu as being commended of the Lord for the unsparing vengeance which he took upon the house of Ahab,[3] whereas Hosea speaks of Jehu's bloody deed as something to be avenged upon his own house.[4] Old Testament data indicate, furthermore, an occasional inaccuracy in the New Testament report of historical facts. Thus the genealogy, recorded in the first chapter of Matthew, is said to contain fourteen links for each of three intervals between Abraham and Jesus; but it is not possible, on the ground of Old Testament history, to assign just this number of names to every one of the intervals.[5] In the account of some of the gospel scenes, also, the report of one evangelist diverges from that of another.[6] In short, the evi-

[1] Compare Deut. x. 1–5 with Ex. xxv. 10–21, xxxvii. 1–9.

[2] Compare 2 Sam. xxiv. 9 with 1 Chron. xxi. v; 2 Sam. xxiv. 24 with 1 Chron. xxi. 25; 1 Kings v. 16 with 2 Chron. ii. 2; 1 Kings xv. 32 with 2 Chron. xiv. 1; 1 Kings xv. 14 with 2 Chron. xiv. 3; 1 Kings vii. 15 with 2 Chron. iii. 15. More significant than most of the above is the discrepancy between 2 Sam. xxiv. 1 and 1 Chron. xxi. 1.

[3] 2 Kings x. [4] Hosea i. 4.

[5] Compare, furthermore, Gen. xlvi. 26, 27 with Acts vii. 14; Numb. xxv. 9, with 1 Cor. x. 8; 2 Chron. xxiv. 20, with Matt. xxiii. 35.

[6] Compare, for example, Matt. xx. 30–34 with Mark x. 46–52; Matt. xxviii. 1–6 with Mark xvi. 1–6, and Luke xxiv. 1–10; also, Matt. xxvii. 5–8 with Acts i. 18, 19.

dence decisively establishes the conclusion that inspiration did not so far cancel or control human agency as to secure complete inerrancy. It may, indeed, be suggested that all discrepancies can be accounted for as the mistakes of copyists. This solution may apply to individual instances, but in many cases it is entirely inadmissible; and in general it has too much the appearance of an arbitrary makeshift to be entertained by any except those who think it necessary to maintain, at all hazards, a preconceived theory of biblical perfection. Such should be reminded that there may be an unseemly pettiness in defending the Bible, as well as in searching for flaws in its contents.

The substantial truth of the biblical history is all that is needed to support the edifice of revelation, and substantial truth is not denied by occasional errors in subordinate details. In general, Bible history bears very well such tests as are available. While antiquarian research cannot be said to elicit a favorable verdict in all instances, it does confirm the historical groundwork of the Bible to a gratifying extent. For its earliest narratives the tests are of course very scanty. Proper historic proof is here out of the question. Some have indeed thought that the ethnic traditions about the beginnings of human history tend by their resembling features to confirm the opening chapters of Genesis. But this order of considerations affords only a moderate ground of confidence. These traditions may have been largely the product of legendary construction in the oldest nations, and been passed on by them to other peoples. The purer and nobler cast of the biblical stories does not by itself prove them the originals. This superiority would be accounted for were it supposed that the common traditions were taken up and interpreted by an Israelitish prophet, and purged of all that was out of harmony with the religious point of view to which he had been educated. His training within the Hebrew theocracy would guarantee that the ground ideas put into his narratives should agree with the outcome to which

the process of revelation had arrived in his time; but that it would exclude all legendary materials is a conclusion which it is not easy to establish. So the field of beginnings lies, for the most part, beyond the application of historic tests, aside from the record which has been engraven upon the face of nature. But for the Christian dogmatist this is of small consequence. What he needs for his use is the underlying ideas of the first chapters of Genesis — the imprint of such conceptions as the absolute supremacy of God, the goodness of the creation, the high destination of man, the sanctity of marriage, the introduction of moral evil through an abuse of freedom, and the tendency of apostasy to pass on from bad to worse unless met by powerful remedial agencies. With these truths under his hand, he can afford to waive the question whether the inspiration of the historian was such as to enable him to reproduce from a far distant past the literal truth of the first passages in the history of the earth and of man. The New Testament, it may be observed, makes but scanty reference to the details of the narratives preceding the call of Abraham.

A popular, technical faith is no doubt likely to be shocked by this admission of the fact of errors. But it is only necessary to recapitulate what has already been said to indicate that the fact need not be a stumbling-block to intelligent faith. Three considerations in particular are to be kept in mind: (1) The great things of the Bible are so very great, and so harmoniously related to each other, that whoever sees them in true perspective must feel that they can never be obscured by this or that error in a subordinate range. (2) So far as the errors have any moral or religious bearing, the progress of revelation has provided an adequate corrective. The standard, as ultimately presented in the spirit and teaching of Christ, and in the apostolic reflection of the same, is a standard which rises high before the loftiest thought and striving of men and is in no danger of being transcended or superseded. (3) So far as the errors have no real bearing on morals or

religion, they are to be regarded as too loosely connected with the essential edifice of biblical truth to interfere at all seriously with its claims. They take rank among things incidental to the process of erecting the edifice. As belonging to the scaffolding they cannot deny the perfection of the edifice, the erection of which was the proper task of revelation.

Possibly one may be disposed to ask still, How shall the reader of a book not guaranteed to be perfectly inerrant distinguish between truth and error? The answer is quite obvious, so far as concerns a general principle of procedure. No intelligent or morally earnest person accepts the Bible as a whole by a mere caprice or arbitrary act of will. He accepts it because he finds that it possesses characteristics which make it credible that it contains a divine revelation. Now, the characteristics which approve the Bible as a whole manifestly are fitted to serve as a standard, generally speaking, for judging a specific portion. If such portion in tone and content is seen to be contradictory to these characteristics, it is made questionable whether it has any better source than human fallibility. Mere position in a complex body of writings cannot require the truth-seeker to close his eyes to the actual character of an individual sentiment. Any sentiment which, if found in a compendium of ethnic scriptures, would elicit a disparaging estimate from a mind enlightened by the completed biblical revelation, cannot consistently be ranked as truth simply on the ground of its being in the commonly recognized biblical canon. To assume the opposite would involve the grotesque conclusion that we need each to keep on hand two minds, one for judging sentiments recorded in the Bible, and another for judging the same sentiments when found elsewhere.

The above are the main considerations to be noted, namely, that inspiration was dynamical rather than mechanical, and that, so far as it was a factor in the process of revelation, it wrought to secure infallibility, not so much in subordinate particulars or matters external to the central purpose of the Bible,

as in the trend and outcome of its teaching. A few points of lesser significance may receive a passing glance, such as the question of degrees of inspiration, the relation of inspiration to language, its connection with the act of writing, and its kinship with the operation of the Holy Spirit in His general office of enlightenment.

That there were different degrees of inspiration follows from the consideration that the personality of the writer was a real coefficient in the matter of biblical production. The larger and loftier the personality of the writer and the better his antecedent training, the less, naturally, were the barriers which he interposed to divine illumination, and the greater his competency to receive and to impart the pure truth of God. The diversity of tasks assigned to the different writers also suggests different degrees of inspiration. To record plain matters of fact evidently did not demand such a measure of illumination as the responsible office of expounding the great truths of God's nature and redemptive purpose.

While the theory of verbal inspiration, current in the seventeenth century and still defended by an occasional advocate, must be rejected as involving an untenable mechanical conception, and as contradicted by undeniable characteristics of the Scriptures, it may still be granted that inspiration affected the language of the sacred writers. Whatever influences feeling and thought naturally also, by reason of intrinsic connection, influences language. But to influence is not necessarily to determine outright. The personality of the writer also influenced his language in every instance. Only a partial determination of the verbal outcome can therefore be imputed to inspiration. In any given instance the degree of that determination must be regarded as entirely problematical.

There is no warrant for connecting inspiration exclusively with the act of writing. The New Testament gives no hint that the apostles were to be more amply guided in writing than in speaking. The office of inspiration was to effect

receptivity for the truth, or to enliven perception of the truth. Supposing the truth to be already within the mental grasp of the sacred writer before he set himself to the task of transcription, there would be no further requirement for inspiration except to sustain that holy feeling and spiritual alertness which are always needed for the right discharge of an important duty, and which would be especially appropriate in the production of a writing destined to fulfill a great providential office.

A certain kinship may be supposed between the inspiration of the sacred writers and the enlightening operation of the Holy Spirit in believers generally. Decisive proof in the matter is doubtless beyond our reach, but it is not overbold to assume the probability that the difference in the two cases is rather as to scope than as to mode. In the believer as a subject of divine grace an order of convictions respecting his personal standing is wrought by the Holy Spirit. In the sacred writer an order of convictions is wrought respecting the divine kingdom, or some phase of that kingdom. It is the same Spirit that operates in both cases and the same kind of subject that is operated upon. It is difficult therefore to imagine any good reason for denying that the mode of operation in one instance is akin to that in the other.

No distinct name has been given to the theory which has been advocated. And in fact it is best described by a summary of the conceptions which it includes. No one of the current names is strictly applicable. The term "plenary inspiration" is too indefinite for any intelligible use. "Verbal inspiration," taken in its ordinary sense, is a name for a palpable exaggeration. The so-called "intuitional theory" sins by defect. In so far as it emphasizes the personality of the sacred writer, it has indeed a close affinity with the view advocated above. But the intuitional theory disparages the notion of the direct operation of the Holy Spirit, and implies that the educated faculties of the scriptural writers, by their own virtue,

grasped all the truth which they conveyed. We find no adequate ground for the assumption, and therefore cannot classify our view of inspiration as the intuitional theory. The following statement expresses the substance of our conception: — The true theory of inspiration includes the main thought of the intuitional theory, and adds a good margin for the direct agency of the Holy Spirit, that agency being conceived as operating dynamically rather than mechanically, and as being akin in its mode to that which has place in various acts of spiritual enlightenment in the subjects, generally, of the gracious visitation of the Spirit.

XIII. — Question of the Sufficiency of the Biblical Revelation, or of the Possibility of Authoritative Supplements.

Before leaving the subject of the chapter, a few words will be appropriate on the question whether revelation needs, or admits of, any authoritative supplements. The response to this question naturally directs attention to reason, to Christian consciousness, and to ecclesiastical authority.

The extent to which reason may be made a criterion of an alleged revelation has already been considered.[1] The question of its competency to supplement the revelation in the Bible might be entertained in this connection. This question, however, blends very largely with that of the relation of Christian consciousness to the biblical revelation. For, what is "Christian consciousness" but a name for the cardinal judgments and feelings of Christians, their religious modes both in the line of thought and emotion? It may be defined in brief as the educated reason and feeling of Christian believers. Accordingly, in pronouncing on the competency of Christian

[1] Chapter I, Section IX.

consciousness to supplement the Bible we are, at the same time, pronouncing on the competency of reason in that particular; at least on the competency of reason in Christian minds; and to one who accepts the Bible as containing a divine revelation, unchristian or anti-christian reason cannot appear more trustworthy than Christian, or entitled to larger prerogative.

From the premises of Christian faith, acknowledging as it does the authority of Jesus Christ as the Son of God, and confessing the fulfillment of His promise to the apostles that they should be divinely guided in representing His person and truth, it follows that a substantial finality pertains to the New Testament body of teaching. Now this body of teaching is so well rounded, so ample in content, that it is most reasonably regarded as containing in principle all important truth respecting the relation of men to God or to their fellow-men. Improvement must therefore relate to deductions rather than to any foundation teachings. It is possible that successive generations should advance to a better understanding of this or that truth, to a clearer perception of the proper application of this or that doctrine, to a holding of different phases of teaching in a truer proportion, to more normal ways of feeling on this or that point. And herein is defined the vocation of the Christian consciousness. In its proper unfoldment it does not so much reach beyond the deposit of truth in revelation, as improve upon the prior understanding of some portion of that truth and upon the habitual feeling connected therewith.

That the Christian consciousness must unfold normally is of course no self-evident truth. There may be lapses and retrocessions, perversions of thought and feeling as well as improvements. Christian consciousness will be no better than the proportion of sound mental engagement, of sincere love of the truth, of consecrated purpose, of pure affection, and of living experience of divine grace, which is characteristic of the Christian community. Still, on any but a pessimistic view of

human nature, it is legitimate to expect that in the long run genuine advances will be made. One and another unmistakable gain has already been achieved. There is no probability, for example, that the Christian world will ever again think and feel on the subject of human slavery as vast communities of Christians have thought and felt in the past. No more is it probable that Christians will again feel respecting future punishment by literal fire as whole generations have felt upon this subject. Advance may be slow and interrupted, but the idea of an advancing Christian consciousness is plainly not a pure fiction.

If Christian consciousness has no clear prerogative to add to the foundation teaching of the New Testament, still less can such a prerogative be conceded to church authority. To impose as matter of belief what is not demanded by the educated reason and feeling of the Christian community is a species of tyranny and usurpation. Legitimate church authority must follow in the wake of Christian consciousness, and require at least no more than it dictates. Doubtless it is theoretically conceivable that the good reason and feeling of the Christian community should be more than matched by a divine charism in certain standing officials. But who are these officials, and what credentials are they able to show for their supernatural gift and consequent authority? As will be shown in another connection, the actual claimants of such authority are overwhelmingly convicted of unfounded pretenses by the data of Christian history. There is no warrant, therefore, for supposing that church authority has any function in the enforcement of Christian truth outside of or beyond the demands of the educated reason and feeling of the Christian community at large.

It will perhaps be suggested that tradition should have been mentioned, if not in place of church authority, at least in association therewith. But tradition is little else than a name for an imaginary entity. At any rate, if tradition be taken in

the sense of the standard Roman Catholic definition, namely, as the portion of revelation transmitted orally by the apostles, credible proof is wanting that any such thing is extant. The earliest of the fathers, instead of possessing more of the apostolic teaching than is contained in the New Testament, apparently were in possession of less than might easily be derived from that source. Not one of them has made the least authentic addition to the recorded facts of Christ's life. A man in such direct succession as Irenæus could add only evident misconceptions to the matter of the evangelical narratives.[1] Taken in a body, the early fathers show, either by their contradictions or by their silence, that they had no certified teaching of the apostles, outside the canon, that was of any consequence. It is true that after the beginning of the third century an occasional reference may be found to a secret tradition. But the reference, while indicating that motives to use reserve in teachings placed under the inspection of the uninitiated had begun to work effectively at that time in some portions of the church, affords no voucher as to the handing down of any unrecorded item of genuine apostolic teaching. The so-called *Disciplina Arcana*, which was distinctly recognized by the Church in the fourth century, evidently had not become any part of her policy at the middle of the second century, since Justin Martyr, in a writing addressed to the emperor, senate, and Roman people generally, felt perfectly free to describe that to which this "discipline" more especially applied, namely the rites of baptism and the eucharist. It is to be noticed also that the *Disciplina Arcana*, like the code which governed the contemporary pagan "mysteries," obligated to silence about the Christian ordinances only in respect to their ritual transactions. The dogmatic significance of both baptism and the eucharist was matter of open discussion. If the baptismal creed was included among items not

[1] Cont. Haer. ii. 22.

to be voiced in public, it was in its character as an item of ritual and not on account of its dogmatic contents.[1] Even the admission that some dogmatic content came under the prescription of the *Disciplina Arcana* would not contribute any element of worth to traditionary authority. Such questions as the following would need to be asked: What was that content? How long did it run underground? When was the bond of secrecy cancelled so as to allow it to emerge and to pass into written records? What guarantee is there either that it came from the original spring of apostolic teaching, or that in its underground travel it was not so mixed with foreign ingredients as to become greatly corrupted? Manifestly it is so completely impossible to identify it with any apostolic datum, that, supposing it ever to have been a real thing, it can have no significance now. We are not permitted, therefore, to suppose any trustworthy current of teachings in the early centuries which did not come to expression in the writings of the fathers. Their silence and their divergences alike testify that nothing of importance was transmitted from the apostles which did not obtain a record in the New Testament writings. It is possible indeed that some points of administration or ritual may have been derived through the channel of oral teaching. But no authority can be claimed on this score even for such matters, since the evidence that they really had any warrant in the word of the apostles lies in the mist. Where nearly everything was manifestly in process of growth, no adequate means for ascertaining unrecorded originals are afforded.

In a truthful nomenclature the extra-biblical authority of the Roman Catholic Church must not be styled tradition, but ecclesiastical authority. What determines doctrinal issues in that Church is not any distinct proof of a pertinent content in the oral teaching of the apostles, but custom, more or less

[1] Compare Anrich, Das antike Mysterienwesen in seinem Einfluss auf das Christenthum, Göttingen, 1894.

old, and of greater or less extent, adopted and made binding by official fiat. As long ago as the beginning of the seventeenth century, the keen-minded Bellarmin seems to have suspected that this, very largely, was the actual method of determining dogmas in his Church, and so he set about adjusting the conception of authoritative tradition to this method. He recognized, indeed, the propriety of historical investigation; but, at the same time, he opened a wide door of escape from the labor and inconvenience of this means of testing dogmas. He says: "When the universal church [that is, the Roman Catholic Church as a whole] embraces anything as a dogma of the faith, which is not found in the divine Word, it is necessary to say that it is derived from apostolic tradition. The reason of this is the following: Inasmuch as the universal Church cannot err, since it is the pillar and foundation of the truth, certainly what the Church believes to be of the faith is without doubt of the faith; but nothing is of the faith except that which God has revealed through apostles or prophets, or which is evidently derived from those sources."[1] In other words, the fact that a dogma is held, proves its right to be held, proves that it is based on apostolic tradition, if no clear authority for it can be found in the written Word. Now, as a dogma must be held universally in the Roman Catholic Church, which has been promulgated by pope and council, or even by the pope alone, it is obvious that, on this basis, tradition is practically superseded by church authority, or the prerogative of the ecclesiastical monarch. The pope may be presumed, by his subjects, to have discovered that history is on the side of his dogmatic determinations, but he cannot be required to give any proof that such is the fact. The old tests of valid tradition set forth by Vincentius — *universitas*, *antiquitas*, and *consensio* — may be discarded. The decree of the chief official authorizes theological inference to leap over

[1] De Verbo Dei, Lib. iv. cap. 9.

all the intervening centuries, and to claim at once the authority of the apostles. This exposition of Bellarmin has not, indeed, been formally approved by the Roman Catholic Church. But convenience has commended it to a considerable number of theologians,[1] and it takes small discernment to discover that it rules in practice. If tradition were more than an empty name, dogmas which are contradicted by the whole tenor of the teaching of Christian antiquity, as are those of the immaculate conception of the Virgin and the infallibility of the pope, would never have been proclaimed as part and parcel of divine revelation, and made binding upon all the faithful

A veritable tradition, in the sense of Vincentius, receives as scanty recognition in Newman's description of doctrinal development as in Bellarmin's theory and in Romish practice. In the famous essay by which he sought to justify to his mind the Roman Catholic faith, Newman allows the most indeterminate datum to serve as the primary basis of an authoritative dogma. In contrast with the ordinary assumption of popes and councils, he grants that some of the most characteristic features of Romanism started from obscure beginnings, and attained to their ultimate status of definite and acknowledged doctrines only by a prolonged growth. The shadowy beginnings and long obscurity, he claims, do not contradict the right or legitimacy of these features, provided the development is known to have proceeded with sufficient continuity, and by the assimilation of congenial materials. Among his tests of normal development he makes no mention of judicious proportion, and in his whole treatise practically discards the notion that corruption or caricature may be induced by excess. It matters not, for example, at what point respect for the Virgin began. It may have begun at so low a point that, in the early liturgies, she was included among the imperfect dead

[1] The Jesuit, Perrone, and Malou, Bishop of Bruges, are examples, among others. See Friedrich, Geschichte des Vatikanischen Konzils, Band I. cap. xxii.

for whom the prayers of the Church were offered.[1] This is no obstacle. It was a perfectly normal development, which added one degree of respect to another, until at length the Virgin was recognized as the crowned queen of heaven, to pray for whom would be a species of sacrilege, since nothing is wanting to her exaltation and blessedness, and all need the invincible efficacy of her intercessions.

On the score of this method what conceivable degree of remoteness from the spirit and teaching of primitive Christianity can be a barrier to accepting a tenet or sanctioning a practice? If from the act of praying for Mary as a sharer in the imperfect lot of humanity the Church may legitimately advance to the act of worshipping her as the Mother of God and the fountain of grace, surely it is not clear why it may not also advance from the visitation of ordinary ecclesiastical penalties on refractory Christians to the banishing, the torturing, the burning alive of heretics. In short, Newman's tests of normal development apply to the latter instance much better than to the former. To pass from a lighter to a severer order of penalties involves no such leap as to pass from the practice of praying for the Virgin to an attitude of mind in which that practice must be rated as a sacrilege.

The Essay on the Development of Christian Doctrine, by Newman, is the one-sided plea of a disquieted spirit bent upon securing a basis of dogmatic rest, and artificially manipulating the evidence to that end. All the truth which it contains is provided for, and at the same time guarded against exaggeration and abuse, in the doctrine which has been outlined respecting the function of the Christian consciousness.

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[1] "Prayers for the faithful departed may be found in the early liturgies, yet with an indistinctness which included St. Mary and the martyrs in the same rank with the imperfect Christian whose sins were as yet unexpiated; and succeeding times might keep what was exact and supply what was deficient." (Essay, p. 354.)

Part II.

THE DOCTRINE OF GOD AND OF HIS RELATION TO THE WORLD AT LARGE.

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CHAPTER I.

THE ATTRIBUTES OF GOD.

I. — Reasons for Concluding that the Theme of the Chapter Lies Within the Sphere of Possible Knowledge.

If the main contention in each of the preceding chapters can be regarded as established, the legitimacy of an attempt to explore the divine attributes follows as a matter of course. It would be absurd to confess entire ignorance on this subject after being certified that a personal God exists, and that He has vouchsafed a specific as well as a general revelation of Himself. Even the bare affirmation that God exists cannot consistently be uttered except on the assumption of some knowledge of God; otherwise we should say just as much if we should substitute for the word "God" in the affirmation an algebraic symbol, or some untranslated and untranslatable hieroglyphic. In the statement sometimes made, "We know that God is, but do not know what He is," the second member cannot stand without emptying the first of all meaning, and

therefore, of all warrant, unless it is warrantable for rational beings to frame propositions in which unintelligible sounds take the place of subjects.

Doubtless there is a liability of presuming upon a larger knowledge of God than is really attainable under earthly conditions. A vainglorious gnosticism is possible, as well as a falsely humble — or, perhaps, boastful — agnosticism. If we confine our attention to the nineteenth century, we must allow that the former preceded and was largely responsible for the latter. The idealistic philosophies of the early part of the century scarcely stopped short of the claim of having found out God to perfection. Schelling and Hegel set forth, as the proper aim and achievement of philosophy, an all-embracing metaphysic of the absolute. Naturally as the doubtful tendencies of their speculations became manifest, there was a revolt in not a few minds against their fundamental assumption. In the reaction some passed to the opposite extreme. This was notably the case with Dean Mansel. Having defined God as the absolute and the infinite, and having characterized the absolute as that which exists in and by itself without necessary relations to any other being, the infinite as that which is free from all possible limitation, he proceeded to deduce such conclusions as the following: The absolute and the infinite cannot, as such, be a cause. For the cause exists only in relation to the effect. But the conception of the absolute implies a possible existence out of all relation. If it be said that the absolute was first alone and afterwards became a cause, this contradicts the idea of the infinite, as implying that God was not from the first all that it was possible for Him to be. Again, the absolute as cause cannot be necessitated, for this implies relation; neither can it be voluntary, for this implies consciousness, which is only conceivable as a relation. From these considerations it follows necessarily that the ideas of creation and personality are inconsistent with that of the absolute and infinite. Still, it is our duty to think of God as per-

sonal, and to believe that He is infinite. This means that we must renounce a speculative knowledge of God and content ourselves with "regulative" notions which are suitable to our present training, but cannot be known to be truly descriptive of the divine nature.[1] Sir William Hamilton took essentially the same position. Herbert Spencer heartily approved the negative side of Mansel's reasoning, only qualifying it at one point and aggravating it at another. He thought it necessary to allow that our thought of the absolute is not purely negative, as it was, at least in some connections, assumed to be by Mansel. We have, he said, a positive, though indefinite consciousness, of the absolute. But, on the other hand, he would not allow this consciousness to count in the slightest degree for knowledge, and was more dogmatic than Mansel ventured to be in declaring the utter unlikeness of our conceptions to the fundamental reality of the universe. Mansel remarked: "We cannot say that our conception of the divine nature exactly resembles that nature in its absolute existence; for we know not what that absolute existence is. But, for the same reason, we are equally unable to say that it does not resemble it; for, if we know not the absolute and infinite at all, we cannot say how far it is, or is not, capable of likeness or unlikeness to the relative and finite." This chance for some partial appropriateness in our conceptions respecting the absolute seems to have been repudiated by Spencer; for he spoke of the obligation to treat every notion of the absolute, which we may frame, as utterly without resemblance to that for which it stands.[2]

Mansel regarded himself as giving to faith what he took away from knowledge; and even Spencer assumed that his theory was advantageous to religion, as assigning to it a field of perfectly inscrutable mystery, where it can suffer no oppo-

[1] The Limits of Religious Thought. See also Sheldon's History of Christian Doctrine, II. 304–306.

[2] First Principles, pp. 94, 113.

sition from science, it being a maxim of science that no exposition of the nature of the absolute can be given. But faith can never be advantaged by denying the conceivability of its supreme object, and religion cannot be made secure by reducing its subject-matter to pure mystery. Much of mystery may indeed be included in the objects of religious contemplation; nevertheless, a religion of sheer mystery is an impossibility. As Pfleiderer has remarked: "It is true enough that there is always an element of mystery in religion, and that a God who should be completely and exhaustively known by our finite intellect would be no God. But it is equally certain that a religion of nothing but mystery is an absurdity, and that the absolutely 'unknowable' wants simply every quality necessary for the object of a positive religious relation."[1] Very little qualification needs to be put upon the strong words of Bowne: "A God who must always remain x for thought and conscience has no more religious value than a centaur or a sea-serpent."[2] A vital impulse to seek for a real relation with a being thus conceived is out of the question. To assimilate God to an infinite void is, by logical consequence, to reduce religion toward an absolute blank. Small children may make play-houses for the sport of tearing them down; but sane and serious men will not trouble themselves to think about God, if they must forthwith cancel their thoughts as in no wise presenting Him in His real nature.

The agnostic doctrine under consideration may be regarded as the counterpart of the ontological argument for the existence of God. As that argument affects to prove the divine existence by definition, so this doctrine goes to work by means of a definition to remove God practically out of existence, as shutting out all knowledge of Him. The method is too easy-going, in the latter case no less than in the former. Let the gratuitous difficulties be avoided which are involved in a

[1] Philosophy of Religion, II. 159. [2] Review of Herbert Spencer, p. 25.

strained definition of God as absolute and infinite, let "absolute" denote simply the absence of dependent or enforced relations, and "infinite" signify simply the absence of all limits not imposed by the divine will or the divine perfections, and the agnostic argumentation is at once robbed of its formidable look. With that use of terms a standing-room will be provided both for the individual in his contemplation and for the God contemplated; and it will not be necessary for one to make so grotesque a sacrifice as the exclusion in thought of himself, of all finite things, and of the highest perfections of the most perfect one, such as self-consciousness, before he can conceive of God as absolute and infinite.

Agnostic terminology is not a recent invention. Some of the fathers and the scholastics laid so strong an emphasis upon the divine transcendence as seemingly to place knowledge of the real nature of God beyond the reach of human faculties. An examination of their total representation, however, will reveal that in most instances their thought was not unlike that of Bonaventura, who allowed a *cognitio per apprehensionem* as contrasted with a *cognitio per comprehensionem*, that is, an apprehension or partial knowledge of God, as contrasted with a comprehension or exhaustive knowledge.[1]

Besides indulging in an incautious emphasis upon the transcendence of God, some of the patristic and scholastic writers paid tribute to agnosticism by the unmeasured stress which they placed upon the simplicity of the divine essence. Indeed, this intemperate stress became a theological habit which reached far into the modern era. Augustine afforded a very positive example of this order of teaching. In his anxiety to exclude utterly the accidental and the composite from God, he ruled out all distinctions within the divine essence, and so made the attributes coincident the one with the other. "God is truly called," he says, "in manifold ways, great, good, wise,

[1] Sent. I. 3. 1. 1.

blessed, true, and whatsoever other things seem to be said of Him not unworthily; but His greatness is the same as His wisdom, for He is not great by bulk, but by power: and His goodness is the same as His wisdom and greatness, and His truth the same as all those things; and in Him it is not one thing to be blessed, and another to be great, or wise, or true, or good, or, in a word, to be Himself." [1] In more recent times Schleiermacher has carried out the notion of the divine simplicity with equal rigor. "All the attributes," he says, "which we attribute to God, designate nothing special in Him, but only something special in the manner of relating to Him our feeling of dependence. . . . The divine thinking is just the same as the divine willing, and omnipotence one with omniscience." [2]

Now this line of representation evidently conducts logically to agnosticism. If there is no real distinction between the attributes which we ascribe to God, if they express nothing more than our varied points of view, then, of course, it follows that we have no authentic exposition of the divine nature, and are left with the bare notion of essence or being. Such a notion makes an utterly fruitless field for theological science, and is also adverse to a practical religious interest. As Dorner remarks: "The acceptance of the objectivity of the divine attributes does not simply concern the interests of apprehension, but even religion demands just that acceptance, and checks absolute identification. Evangelical faith does not allow an identification of righteousness with love or grace, but a distinction between them without separation. So, undoubtedly, volition and knowledge are united in God, but to identify the two would be equivalent to saying that what God knows He also wills, an inference which is not permissible as regards evil. The divine knowledge has a wider reach than the divine will, without imperilling the unity of God. He comprehends

[1] De Trin. vi. 7.

[2] Der Christliche Glaube, §§ 50, 55.

evil in His knowledge, although not in His desire, and evil is therefore not embraced in his creative will." [1]

The Neo-Platonic conception of a predicateless ground, or blank identity, is remote from the legitimate conception of the Supreme Being. It in no wise provides for self-motion or life. The thought of the living God does not lie in that direction. Variety in unity must be characteristic of God, as of every living spirit.[2] The variety does not cancel the unity, and means only that spirit in its affluence has in itself the fitting grounds of varied activities and manifestations. The attributes of the infinite Spirit are indeed through and through essential, having naught of the accidental, which pertains more or less to finite and changing being. But to esteem them essential, it is not necessary to melt them into a common mass, or to dissipate them into a common void. They are essential, as being inalienable, unchanging perfections of God — abiding characteristics of His being, or grounds of His activities and manifestations in the world.

A qualified agnosticism is involved in the platform of one of the latest of the prominent leaders of theological thought in Germany. According to Ritschl, theology attempts a vain and foreign task when it essays to consider what God is in Himself or for Himself. It has only to consider what God is for us, as made known through His Son, and the kingdom of grace which He established. Its sphere is defined by the measure of practical value, or by what God is for the individual and the religious community.

This description, it may be conceded, sets forth the theme which is of preëminent religious interest. But both the propriety and the practicability of the limitation which it emphasizes may be questioned. The fact that God is the highest object of thought, and the presupposition of all things, makes

[1] System of Christian Doctrine, § 15.

[2] Compare the still broader statement by Schurman: "Identity in difference is the characteristic both of being and of thought." (Belief in God, p. 75.)

the investigation of His nature an object of supreme intellectual interest. Nor is this investigation foreign to a religious interest. Convinced that all in God calls for wonder and reverence, the religious mind is naturally impelled to press as far as possible into the sanctuary of the divine nature. Nothing can repress this inquiry, where there is any fullness of intellectual or religious life, except despair of all real understanding of the divine. That the history of speculation enforces modesty and prudence in philosophizing about God may be granted ; but that it enjoins despair of reaching valid conceptions about what God is in Himself is not so clear. We surmise that, in spite of the Ritschlian protest, and of every form of agnosticism, the human spirit will continue its attempt to explore the essential nature of God, and that this effort, if joined with the spirit of piety, will serve as a noble means of development.[1]

The Scriptures do not ignore the mystery which pertains to the divine nature ;[2] but in teaching that man was made in the divine likeness, that he is a candidate for communion with God, and may stand before Him in the relation of sonship,[3] they present ample grounds for inferring a real knowledge of God. To deny the possibility of such knowledge, one must go in the face of the scriptural implications, and assume that there is no discoverable likeness, no possibility of communion, no genuine relation of spiritual sonship. The likeness implies that self-understanding on man's part must lead to some understanding of God, while communion and sonship necessitate the conclusion that there is that in God which corresponds to intelligence and love in man.

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[1] Compare Garvie, The Ritschlian Theology, chap. VI.

[2] Job xi. 7–9, xxiii. 8, 9 ; Ps. xcvii. 2, cxxxix. 6, cxlv. 3 ; Isa. xl. 13, 14, 28 ; Rom. xi. 33–36; 1 Cor. ii. 11; Eph. iii. 20; 1 Tim. vi. 16.

[3] Gen. i. 26, 27 ; Col. iii. 10 ; John xiv. 23 ; 1 John i. 3 ; Prov. iii. 11, 12 ; Isa. lxiii. 16; Hos. i. 10; Matt. vi. 9; Luke xv. 11–32 ; Acts xvii. 28; Gal. iv. 6; 1 John iii. 1; Heb. ii. 10, xii. 7, 8.

The discussion leads to the conclusion that a real, though limited, knowledge of God can and must be affirmed. The limitation of the knowledge doubtless leaves open the door for amendment at one point and another. But knowledge is not entirely despoiled of its claim to reality because of the possibility of more or less amendment. Men who lived before the era of modern geological science, and before the establishment of the Copernican theory, had some real knowledge of the world, even though there was a chance for a great enlargement and perfecting of their views.

II. — The Metaphysical or Non-ethical Attributes.

The divine attributes fall into two groups, those which are not immediately suggestive of the ethical side of divine personality, and those which directly describe that side. The two groups are sometimes distinguished as the metaphysical and the moral — a phraseology whose intent can hardly be misunderstood, though its strict propriety may perhaps be called in question. It is not denied that a full consideration of one or another of the former group may touch on the ethical domain. The ethical, however, is not central to their idea.

On the side of the non-ethical attributes we may enumerate unity, spirituality, immutability, omnipresence, eternity, omniscience, and omnipotence.

The unity of God signifies His solitariness in the rank of original and independent being. It denotes that He is no aggregate or complex of separable units, and that all beside Him is conditioned upon His will and power, so as to be in no proper sense coördinate with Him or entitled to share His name. The term is not a veto upon interior distinctions in the original and independent Being. As has just been argued, a blank homogeneity is foreign to the notion of a living God. Just how far distinctions may reach without compromising

unity is not a subject for indubitable speculative determination. It is evident, however, that a perfect unity excludes the possibility of schism or antagonism within the circle of the Godhead, and that nothing in God can conceivably be separated from Him, any more than an essential function of an organism can be eliminated without cancelling the idea of the organism. In developing the cosmological argument for the divine existence notice was taken of the main grounds, aside from the scriptural teaching,[1] for assuming the unity of God.

From the notion of unity to that of spirituality is but a short step. If matter existed from eternity independent of God, then, of course, it is forever set over against Him as a kind of second deity, instead of constituting any part of His being. If it was freely created by Him, it can hold to Him no higher rank than that of an instrument or contingent adjunct. To suppose it to be eternally inherent in God as a necessary constituent of the divine life is to disparage the self-sufficiency of spirit, and to import a dualism into God by placing alongside His will a second source of energy. This is a gratuitous obscuring of the divine unity which has been especially characteristic of theosophic speculation. Jacob Boehme, for example, argued that life and movement cannot have place in God without multiplicity or contrasts; that the proper contrast of spirit is nature; that in God, accordingly, as the *other*, or counterpart of spirit, a nature eternally subsists; that this is made up of an infinite plenitude of powers, seven of which are fundamental; that the nature thus conceived is at once a condition of vital self-consciousness in God and the antecedent of the sensible world, the energetic potency which is the *fons originis* of matter as known by us.[2]

[1] Deut. iv. 35, vi. 4; Ps. lxxxvi. 10; Isa. xlv. 22; John xvii. 3; 1 Cor. viii. 5–6; 1 Tim. ii. 5.

[2] For a brief summary of the views of Boehme and Baader, see Sheldon's History of Christian Doctrine, II. 406–411.

Franz von Baader held a like view, and contended that it was adapted to render good service to theistic philosophy, since it represents God as having in Himself an adequate means of self-revelation, and leaves, therefore, no occasion to suppose that He needs the creature, as pantheistic schemes assume, in order to become revealed to Himself. But a proper conception of the vitality and sufficiency of spirit in itself, and especially of the infinite Spirit, is the best antidote to pantheistic naturalism. In view of the objections which lie against the theosophic doctrine of an eternal nature, which serves as an *other* to spirit, and is the indispensable condition of real self-consciousness in God, it seems incumbent upon us to take our Lord's declaration, "God is a Spirit,"[1] in an unqualified sense.[2]

The divine immutability is definitely asserted in the Scriptures, especially by James when he describes God as "the Father of lights, with whom can be no variation, neither shadow that is cast by turning."[3] This is a vivid rhetorical expression of the steadiness of the divine nature and administration as opposed to man's wavering character and conduct. It is in no wise to be understood as predicating immobility of God, a notion with which the Scriptures have not the slightest sympathy.

The idea of motionless fixity is also foreign to a philosophical contemplation of the divine immutability. Personal life is

[1] John iv. 24.

[2] Delitzsch endeavored to overcome the dualism involved in Boehme's speculation, and at the same time to maintain that something analagous to corporeity is eternally connected with God. The "glory of God" mentioned in the Scriptures denotes, as he conceived, something pertaining to God in his pre-mundane existence. It is the eternal reflection of the triune God, "the manifestation of His loving nature creating for itself out of itself a means and an instrument of revelation." The process takes place with, not apart from, the will of God. (Biblical Psychology.) This representation provokes a question, not so much respecting the possibility of its truth, as respects the warrant for assuming it to be true.

[3] James i. 17. Compare Ps. xxxiii, 11; Mal. iii. 6.

inconceivable as a standstill, and least of all can God, as the highest embodiment of personal life, be appropriately represented as an unmoving expanse of being. Moreover, a fixity of this sort is excluded by the thought that God is the creator of the world and holds to it a real relation. The theistic conception of creation as a free act supposes a specific exercise of divine efficiency, while a real relation to the world points not only to a constant and immeasurable activity, but also to adaptations of that activity to exigencies which must arise in a system that includes free agents among its constituents. Even the most thoroughgoing deism, while removing God afar off from the world-process, does not escape the necessity of affirming a variation of the divine activity; for in making God to recede from the created world, it represents Him as parting from the relation which He must have held and the agency which He must have exercised in the act of creating. Philosophical thinking may indeed object to the propriety of subordinating the divine activity to any such law of temporal succession as rules finite consciousness; but it has no word to offer against the most positive conception of the vastness, constancy, variety, and manifold adaptation of that activity.

Immutability implies that God in all His activities must remain the same, too perfect either to increase or to wane, either to transcend Himself or to fall below Himself. Ethically applied His immutability signifies the absolute indefectibility of His goodness and righteousness.

In considering the divine omnipresence we need to revert to the root idea of substance. This is undoubtedly causality. That which does, or can do, nothing is simply the void, a mere nonentity. Being is defined by the modes and the measure of its activity. As was observed in another connection, greatness depends, not on space-filling bulk, but on range of action possible or actual. Now God is the one agent whose range of action is unlimited. This is the meaning of His omnipresence. He is present to all things as acting immediately

God immutable in Being, attributes, & Motives

upon all things. What makes distance to us is the limitation of our power of immediate action. For God no such limitation exists. One thing therefore is just as near to Him as another, or, to say the same thing in different terms, He is equally present to all things. This point of view was well expressed by Thomas Aquinas. "God is in all things," he says, "not indeed as part of their essence, or as accident, but as an agent is present to that upon which he acts. . . . God by the excellence of His nature is above all things, and yet is in all things, as cause of their being." [1]

In the Scriptures heaven is represented as the peculiar abode of God.[2] But this may be regarded as another way of describing a special sphere of the manifestation of God, or of the apprehension of His presence and glory. His transcendence of space limitations is not overlooked in the Bible. On the contrary, He is described therein as one whom the heaven of heavens cannot contain, and from whose presence there is no possible escape in height or depth, in region swept by the wings of the morning or covered by the darkness of night.[3]

The eternity of God indicates primarily that His being is without beginning or end; and secondarily that the experience of time, which is a necessity in the consciousness of a limited being, is not a necessity for the divine consciousness. The ground for including the latter element in the idea of the divine eternity is the rational consideration, that an experience of time can have place only where there is a consciousness of succession, and that this consciousness is unavoidable only where there is something less than a full and immediate grasp of all knowable objects. Conceiving of God as perfect, or exempt in His nature from the law of growth, and as having perfect knowledge of Himself, we seem forced to admit that experi-

[1] Sum. Theol. I. 81.

[2] Deut. xxvi. 15; 1 Kings viii. 30; Neh. ix. 27; Job xxii. 12; Ps. xxxiii. 13, lxxx. 14, cxv. 3; Isa. lxvi. 1; Amos ix. 6: Matt. v. 45, vi. 9.

[3] 1 Kings viii. 27; Ps. cxiii. 6, cxxxix.; Jer. xxiii. 23, 24.

ence of time must be foreign to Him, if He be viewed by Himself, or as to the essential mode of His consciousness. All reality being known, and perfectly known, no new factor could come in to effect the impression of succession. In this view the eternity of God has to be conceived as timelessness.

A complete theory, however, cannot stop with this line of representation. It must consider the knowledge of God as determined, not merely by what He is in Himself, but by His relation to the world. Having created a world in which a temporal order prevails, He cannot be supposed to ignore His own workmanship, or to be unconscious of its character as changing and temporal. He must know what the experience of time is to men, and in the due administration of His kingdom must accommodate His acts to their consciousness of succession. To shut out from His view distinctions of before and after would be to limit His vision to something less than the sum of reality; for these distinctions, if they are not real in any other sense, are at least so as matters of the mental experience of finite beings. It may be difficult to adjust this truth to the foregoing thought, that the essential mode of the divine consciousness does not imply succession. Still, it is not apparent that the two views are contradictory. God by Himself and God with the world are different objects of contemplation, and it is only reasonable to suppose that the contemplation should correspond to the diversity of the objects, that an addition of the temporal to the eternal should modify in some sort the divine cognition. This is not saying that in its mode the divine cognition is assimilated to the human, but only that real account is made in the divine contemplation of the element of temporality in finite experience. A conclusion of this sort does not impeach the divine absoluteness, for the world has being only through the will and power of God.

By virtue of His foreknowledge, God may indeed be conceived as grasping at once the successive events of the world process. But His relation to this process is not merely specu-

lative or ideal. It is practical as well. God is the living, working God, and not simply a mirror so adjusted that all events are reflected therein simultaneously. He orders the times and the seasons. His efficiency blends with the stream of events and shapes its course. This efficiency is exercised with constant respect to the time limitations of men, and could not otherwise attain its end. The foreknowledge of God, therefore, cannot be regarded as so relating Him to the changing realities of the world that He gives no sort of recognition to succession.

The eternity of God, as contrasted with the evanescent things of the world, is a subject for contemplation at once comforting and awe-inspiring. In the Scriptures it is very strikingly presented in both of these aspects.[1]

The notion of infinitude or perfection, when applied to that of knowledge, involves the conclusion that God's knowledge comprehends all the knowable, — all the actual in Himself and in the world, and all the possible that is founded in His will. Genuine theists are commonly agreed in giving the divine omniscience this compass. That on which they differ is the question concerning the relation of God's knowledge to the free acts of creatures, the question whether such acts are knowable before they occur, and if so, on what grounds. Those who deny freedom out and out evidently find no problem here. Leaving aside this party we have three opinions to notice.

The first theory may be called the Arminian by way of intelligible antithesis to the second. It would not be much of a misnomer, however, to call it the catholic theory, since it was the current theory in the pre-Reformation Church from the apostolic age onwards, has been generally held among Lutherans and Anglicans, and is still dominant in the Greek and Roman Catholic communions. This theory emphasizes the power of contrary choice as a constituent of human free-

[1] Deut. xxxiii. 27; Ps. xc. 1–4, cii. 26–28; Isa. lvii. 15; 1 Tim. vi. 16; Rev. i. 8.

dom, and hence affirms that foreknowledge of free acts, so called, is a foreknowledge of acts properly contingent, or such as might not have been wrought on the occasion of their occurrence. Its advocates hold that God's knowledge is intuitive, having as immediate grasp of the remotest member in a succession as of the nearest, and not dependent on a process of inference from cause to effect. The possibility of His knowledge being thus intuitive and all-embracing they either confess to be an unqualified mystery, or attempt to explain by the assumption that the temporal sequence of events pertains entirely to our subjective view, that, intrinsically, or as presented to the divine intellect, events do not fall under time distinctions, and so may all be grasped in an undivided view. This is the most of an explanation that can be offered; but to many it will seem to contain a mystery scarcely less than the one which it undertakes to resolve. To objectors from this point of view it is at least pertinent to urge that any theory of time, to which resort may be made, will be found to tax the mind's power of rational construction when all its implications are taken into the account. It may be noticed also that the verdict of philosophy, to a very considerable extent, has been given in favor of the idealistic interpretation in question.[1]

A supplement to the Arminian theory has sometimes been

[1] See Part I, Chap. I, Sect. V. From recent philosophical testimonies we cite the following: "In the sight of the eternal One, time vanishes altogether. He sees the past and future as one; at every moment he sees all causes and all effects. . . . The true succession is lost in the inner relation, in the conditional order, to use Lotze's terms, according to which the most remote and the most immediate are combined in His consciousness." (Paulsen, Introduction to Philosophy, p. 368.) "The temporal form [of the cosmic process] as little requires temporal succession in the realizing activity as the spatial form requires spatial extension in the realizing activity. In both cases we come upon an unpicturable ground of the order, but we are not permitted to carry the factors of the phenomenal order into its ontological ground. Unless we are to lose ourselves in the infinite regress, all change must at last be referred to the changeless, the unchangeable source of change. . . . We conclude that the activity whereby the temporal order is realized has no temporality in itself." (Bowne, Metaphysics, second edit., pp. 190, 191.)

proffered in the notion that God knows not only what will occur, but also what would occur on this or that supposable condition — the so-called *scientia media*. But this is a questionable appendix in so far as the acts of free agents are included among the occurrences that belong with the imaginary conditions. The scriptural warrant for it is very slight, not being found in any controlling point of view, but only in isolated sentences which can be taken without violence as meaning something less than belongs to the notion in question. Thus a statement like that of Matthew xi. 21–23 may be regarded as a rhetorical way of emphasizing the hardness of heart which was manifested by the unbelieving Jews, and as expressing a consummate probability rather than a matter of direct and absolute insight. No sober-minded exegete will infer that Christ designed to say that each and every inhabitant of the non-Israelitish cities named would have repented if His mighty works had been wrought in them. What He meant to affirm was, doubtless, that the people of those cities would have been distinctively more receptive for a message accredited like His than were the contemporary Jews in Bethsaida and Capernaum; and this inference could be drawn without any excess of boldness by one who held in clear light the conditions of the two contrasted instances. In consideration of the purely illustrative purpose of the comparison, an inference grounded in a supreme probability was adequate warrant for the terms employed.[1] While thus insufficiently founded in revelation the

[1] The statements contained in Luke xvi. 31 and Acts xxii. 18 do not necessarily imply an infallible foresight of what an individual would do under purely hypothetical conditions, but only such a general certainty as may result from an adequate knowledge of principles and facts. 1 Sam. xxiii. 12 may be explained on the ground that in a practical matter a decided probability was all that was needed to dictate a choice. One who was fully cognizant of the existing facts, and therefore cognizant of the well-nigh inevitable outcome, could properly direct the conviction of the inquirer to the safe alternative. No one of course supposes that God made answer in this case in audible words, but only that the conviction of the inquirer was directed to one alternative as against another.

doctrine that God knows infallibly what free agents would do under purely hypothetical conditions is totally void of philosophical explanation; since the ideality of time can be appealed to only in behalf of a possible foreknowledge (or knowledge) of those contingent events that actually take place, at one point or another, and so become part of the sphere of reality.

The second opinion is the Calvinian, which makes the divine decrees the ground of the certain occurrence of all events, the voluntary actions of men included, and assumes that foreknowledge depends on the certainty thus established by the decrees of God. "He foresees future events," says Calvin, "only in consequence of His decree that they should happen."[1] Many subsequent writers of the Calvinian school have indulged in equivalent statements. The objection to this theory is that it can escape a metaphysical difficulty only at the expense of an immense moral difficulty, and in any event involves a moral difficulty that cannot properly be regarded as of slight consequence. If the divine decrees, in making certain all the evil choices and acts of men, necessitate those choices and acts, then God is the cause of evil, and human responsibility is a fiction. On the other hand, if it be assumed that the divine decrees make certain, without necessitating, a metaphysical mystery, quite as formidable as that involved in the Arminian theory, is introduced. To make certain without necessitating — that is, objectively certain in the sense of the Calvinist — is to determine events to a particular course without employing any real causes of determination. Unless the decrees posit causes of human determinations, it is absolutely inscrutable how they can exclude their contingency. All that is accomplished, then, by the Calvinistic postulate, if a place is secured for moral and responsible action, is to shift mystery from one point to another. Instead of the puzzle as to how intellect can forecast the contingent, we have the puzzle as to how will can over-

[1] Inst. Bk. III. Chap. 23.

come contingency, or make certain, without providing unequivocal causes of determination. In fact, some of the more recent Calvinistic writers have as much as confessed that in point of escaping metaphysical difficulty their own theory has no advantage over the repudiated Arminian theory. "Within the moral sphere," says Shedd, "the divine decree makes certain without necessitating. . . . The question how God does this cannot be answered by man, because the mode of the divine agency is a mystery to him."[1]

To complete the criticism against the Calvinian view, it must be noticed that any sacrifice of metaphysical explanation which may be coupled with it does not serve to clear it of grave moral implications. Suppose it be assumed, as is done by Shedd, that necessity is not imposed upon the acts of men by the divine decrees, it still remains true that the all-embracing decrees express the will of God, even if they do not indicate the mode of its execution. Accordingly they advertise that evil deeds, no less than good, are matter of His choice and purpose.

The third opinion, conceding the proper contingency of the free acts of men, maintains that in the nature of things they cannot be foreknown, being as much excluded from the sphere of omniscience as contradictions are from the sphere of omnipotence. This was the theory of Socinus. More recently it has been favored by Rothe and Martensen, and advocated with great earnestness by L. D. McCabe. The one advantage of the theory is its avoidance of the speculative difficulty which is involved in the thought of intuitive foreknowledge, or immediate grasp of all coming events, on the part of God. The practical advantages which it is supposed to have over the Arminian theory are drawn mostly, not to say entirely, from illusory conceptions. The latter theory, for example, is charged with clouding over the divine benevolence and justice. "God

[1] Dogmatic Theology, I. 404.

cannot be infinitely benevolent," it is said, "if He creates individual beings whom He foresees will be eternally miserable. . . . If from all eternity God foresaw that you were to be eternally miserable, and still, with all these terrible realities before Him, He allowed you to come into existence, it is the baldest mockery for Him to ask you to obey and worship Him, and to seek His favor and presence." Before penning these lines, the writer should have asked himself, What kind of a concrete or specifically distinguished entity is that to which God can be introduced, or to which He can introduce Himself, and then subsequently decide whether that very entity shall be an entity, or come into existence? The supposed case presumes upon a too facile interchange between being and nothing. That which is a logical prius of foreknowledge cannot consistently be regarded as subject to choice after foreknowledge. But foreknowledge of an individual as possessed of a distinctive self-developed character has for logical prius the creation of the individual, his implication in a system of reality, and the use, in a determinate way, of the moral opportunities of a personal career. It is, therefore, contrary to the intrinsic conditions of foreknowledge to suppose any one of these particulars, the first no less than the others, to be still hinged on a divine choice, and capable of exclusion *after* (whether in a logical or temporal sense) the foresight of that which follows from the particulars. If Judas, the betrayer, was not actually to be, and to be precisely Judas the betrayer, God could not have foreknown him as such. To suppose God, therefore, to have refused to create him on account of his foreseen character, is to suppose God to have acted on the score of a reason which the supposition of non-creation makes it inconceivable that He should have been cognizant of. And so of any other concrete individual. God may be imagined to consider whether He shall create a being, or an order of beings, after some ideal pattern, but not an individual implicated in a given system of reality, and having a specific self-

won character; *in that character*, the individual can be introduced to His contemplation only on condition that he is to be. Equally wide of the mark with the passage cited is the following: "No ruler ought to be angry with a subject before he has violated his law. But prescience makes God sit in judgment on me, sentence me, adjust my punishment, arrange for my endless abode in perdition with Satan, long before I committed the least offense against His law." To this the obvious reply is, that foreknowledge no more discards temporal intervals and the varying merits of the person who lives through those intervals than does post-knowledge. If the infallible memory of God does not prevent Him from viewing a man according to His changing character through the past, no more does His infallible prescience hinder Him from viewing a man according to the scale of his character in each successive interval of the time covered by the forecast. Wrath and judgment fall only where they are deserved no less in His foresight than in the regress of His thought. The passage in question makes a gratuitous and unwarrantable assumption that God must view as an indivisible unit things so widely distinguished as innocent personality, guilty personality with still existing capacities for good, and incorrigibly wicked personality.

Two objections hold against the doctrine of the divine nescience. In the first place, it presents God as dwelling largely in the dark, learning by the common empirical method, and incapable of forecasting the outcome of the schemes which He has initiated. It is true that the opposing theory cannot altogether evade the thought of a divine venture. If, on the one hand, God cannot know altogether what he will do except as He foresees the acts of creatures, on the other hand, the knowledge of what He will do, so far as His acts are conditions of the existence and acts of creatures, must be logically antecedent to the knowledge of creatures and their doings. It seems necessary, therefore, to assume a sovereign

choice of certain fixed elements, which condition free agency in the world, as the logical prius of the divine foreknowledge of contingent events. But this admission does not cancel all advantage on the side of the postulate of foreknowledge. The logical priority involves no temporal succession. From this point of view we are allowed to think of the whole sphere of reality as luminous to God from eternity — a conception which must be regarded as in itself more acceptable than the assumption that the future is like a dark hemisphere to Him whom we call the Omniscient. The main emphasis, however, belongs to the second objection, namely, the incompatibility of the doctrine of nescience with the contents of revelation. The Bible teaches foresight of events that must be regarded as conditioned through and through upon the free agency of men. As has been shown, elements of distinct prediction are found in both Testaments. While an occasional assimilation of the divine to the human mode and measure of knowledge may appear, the Scriptures in their higher ranges represent God as having a reach of vision and certainty of plan which are irreconcilable with the notion that the future is largely veiled to His sight.[2] The prophetical consciousness stands distinctly on the side of the assumption of complete foreknowledge. Christ gave unequivocal expression to that consciousness when he intimated that the day of judgment is known to the Father. That is as much as saying that no order of events is hidden from His view. For, in proportion as the notion must be repudiated that He has fixed the time of the great judicial crisis arbitrarily, or without regard to the highest interests of the kingdom, it is necessary to conclude that His foresight embraces a vast complex of events whose course is thoroughly conditioned by the free agency of men.

The omnipotence of God signifies that His power has no

[1] Part I, Chap. III, Sect. VI.

[2] Ps. cxxxix. 2; Isa. xlvi. 10, xlviii. 3; Job xiv, 5; John vi. 64; Acts xv. 18; Rom. viii. 29; Heb. iv. 13; 1 Pet. i. 20.

other limits than those which are imposed by rational and ethical perfection of nature and consistency of action. Within these limits, which really describe rather than restrict, we may take unqualifiedly the words of the gospel, "With God all things are possible." [1] For the vital sense and majestic expression of God's unlimited might, the Old Testament writers stand unequaled in all literature.[2]

The objection, as old as the days of Origen, that infinite power in God would involve imperfect self-knowledge, since it is the nature of knowledge to bound or to circumscribe, is based on a one-sided view of the infinite. The infinite in God is not an indefinite expanse, which cannot become definite except by being marked off and thereby losing its infinitude: it is rather the positive and definite by virtue of its essential character, or its intrinsic contrast with everything imperfect. The divine infinitude properly conceived, to repeat a previous statement, must be seen to involve perfect self-grasp as well as every other perfection.

In pantheistic schemes, at least in those of the Spinozistic type, the denial of all free choice involves the limitation of the power of God to the sum of beings actually existent. The universe, as necessarily evolved, expresses perpetually all the ability to produce which belongs to God. Omnipotence from this point of view can be only another name for the causality back of the world. Thus it was understood by Schleiermacher.[3] But genuine theism, asserting as it does the transcendence as well as the immanence of God, must hold that the actual is not the full measure of the possible. Supposing God to be true person, it is perfectly conceivable, so far as mere power is concerned, that He could increase the sum of created being. Nor is it obvious that wisdom so conditions

[1] Matt. xix. 26.

[2] Job xxvi., xxxviii.; Ps. xxxiii.; Isa. xl.; Jer. xxxii. 17, 27. Compare Eph. iii. 20.

[3] Der Christliche Glaube, § 54.

the use of power as to leave no proper discretion or choice between alternatives. In the realm of the non-ethical, especially, different schemes may stand so fully on a parity that nothing in God shall bar out the choice of any one among several. At any rate, before concluding positively that God was of necessity shut up to the existing world-plan, one needs to be assured that an equivalent for anything actual is speculatively inconceivable.

Every species of dualism, quite as obviously as the pantheistic point of view, circumscribes the power of God. A recent example has been afforded in the teaching of John Stuart Mill. The amount of evil in the world, he contended, makes it impossible to admit both the benevolence of God and His omnipotence, and it best suits the religious understanding to sacrifice the latter. Mill has doubtless directed to the alternative which is practically most eligible, supposing the irreconcilable opposition which he predicates actually to exist. As to the fact of the opposition, it may be confessed that it is not easy to demonstrate that all things in the world harmonize at once with the thought of omnipotence and of perfect benevolence in the world's Author. Still, the lesser difficulty does not lie on the side of Mill's conclusion. His inference is counter to the philosophical demand for unity, is uncongenial to a living religious faith, and in the Christian outlook is opposed or obviated by the great facts of revelation.[1]

[1] It may be well to notice an objection against the propriety of the enumeration which has been given of the non-ethical attributes. It is alleged that spirituality is not properly mentioned as an attribute since God is in essence a spirit; also that unity, immutability, eternity, and omnipresence are not so much attributes as necessary inductions from the divine attributes or perfections. As regards the first point, the obvious response is that *being* is a broader term than *spirit*, and that consequently there can be no logical impropriety in describing God as belonging to the spiritual order of being, in other words as having the quality or attribute of pure spirituality. The notion of spirituality, like that of materiality, may be composite; but the term actually describes to our minds the kind of being which God is, and so has a genuine attributive significance. As for unity, immutability, eternity and omnipresence, they each express that which is distinctive of God. Let it be granted

III. — The Moral Attributes.

It was noticed among the arguments for the divine existence[1] that the ethical in man presupposes an ethical person back of the world. Not only does the former require the latter for its explanation; it is immediately connected therewith by a practical bond. The sense of obligation and the feeling of merit or demerit impel to a recognition of a righteous will, an impersonation of moral order, which is above the individual and holds him accountable.

The lesson which is taught by the moral experience of the individual is enforced by that of society at large. Moral bonds underlie the community life of men and are indispensable to its perpetuity. It is true that earthly success is often won in the way of unrighteousness, and that might seems repeatedly to have the victory over right. In view of the frequent disproportion between lot and conduct, it must be admitted that faith has a practical occasion to picture a throne of judgment lying beyond the earthly scene. Still, history abundantly illustrates that the stability of society is dependent on morality, and that destruction approaches when moral bonds begin to be relaxed. It is as if the authority which said to the sea, "Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further," had marked out the bounds of tolerance for states and empires, and opened a pit for all such as rush on heedlessly in the course of violence and iniquity. Taking events at a short range, and endeavoring to deal with details, interpretation easily becomes baffled. But history in its general outlines can be seen to enforce the thought that a righteous sovereignty is over the world. Healthy minds will ever sympathize with the prophetical

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that they do not stand for strictly independent aspects, or that they are seen to follow necessarily from other attributes or perfections; still, as being descriptive of divine peculiarities which are not immediately suggested by other terms, they are appropriately mentioned in the list of divine attributes.

[1] Part I, Chap. II, Sect. X.

delineation of a majestic and righteous providence in the earth, as opposed to any pessimistic creed with its picture of a worthless round of events.

For the Christian consciousness the ethical character of God is of course as the sun in the heavens. He who possesses this consciousness would as soon think of blotting out all light and hope, and invoking self-annihilation, as of renouncing his faith that God is supremely ethical.

To ascribe an ethical nature to God means something more than according to Him a recognition of moral distinctions and an administration which respects those distinctions. It means that moral feeling in God is coördinate with His perfect knowledge and His unlimited power; that the leading phases of pure sentiment in men have their counterpart in Him; that He has positive delight in moral worth in accordance with His perception of its value, and a corresponding abhorrence of the morally vile. If this description be charged with anthropomorphism, we have only to repeat what has been said before, that we dignify the idea of God far more by giving to it the best content which the analogy of our own spirits supplies, than by treating it in a nihilistic manner. Moreover, to rule out sensibility is to exclude the capacity for blessedness. God is and can be infinitely blessed only as there is in Him a plenitude of the most pure and lofty feelings. What places Him in contrast with men is the fact that feeling in Him is never out of reason or out of proportion, and so never becomes perturbation of mind. The deepest calm and the highest intensity are united and reconciled in Him; for He is never out of harmony with Himself or disconcerted about His designs, and yet is so absolutely devoted to righteousness that He cannot be in the slightest degree indifferent to moral conduct.

A compendious expression for the ethical nature of God is given in the phrase *holy love*. With nearly equal propriety it might be defined as a *loving righteousness*. The meaning is not that holiness is strictly subsumed under love, or love

under righteousness, but rather that the terms of either couplet stand for closely related and perfectly harmonious perfections.

With holiness and righteousness a third term has a natural association, namely, justice. These are not so much names of clearly distinguished attributes as designations of the same fundamental aspect of the divine nature from somewhat different points of view. The holiness of God expresses His stainless purity and absolute separation from all moral corruption. It points to the truth that no impure person can stand before Him, and behold Him in any wise as He is, without being put to confusion and feeling that he is confronted by an infinite protest against his sin. The righteousness of God signifies that in His nature is the perfect standard of right, and that His will is always in absolute accord with that standard. The attribute of justice involves the same conception with a more distinct emphasis upon the executive function of God's righteous will in apportioning to moral agents the awards suitable to their conduct and character. The scriptural testimony to these aspects of the divine nature runs through the whole texture of the sacred books, and is also embodied in many distinct declarations.[1]

Justice in the sense defined, as being an immanent characteristic of God, evidently cannot be denied or overruled. The only point which stands in doubt is the extent of its demands. Does it require as a condition of forgiveness that any sin should be offset by an equivalent rendered as a tribute to righteousness? Does it thus debar a culprit from the hope of securing reconciliation by any means of his own, inasmuch as he is under obligation to render a perfect service always, and can-

[1] Ex. xv. 11, xx. 5, xxxiv. 7; Lev. xi. 44, 45, xix. 2, xx. 7, 26, xxii. 32; Deut. xxxii. 4; Job iv. 17, 18, xv. 15, xxv. 4–6, xxxiv. 12, 23; Ps. v. 4, xi. 7, xlviii. 10, lxxi. 19, lxxxix. 14, cxlv. 17; Isa. vi., lvii. 15; Ezek. xxxvi. 20–23, xxxix. 7; Hab. i. 13; Rom. ii. 2; 2 Cor. v. 10; Heb. xii. 14, 29; James i. 13; 1 Pet. i. 15, 16; Rev. xvi. 7.

not make good any deficit which may have been incurred? Would the atoning work of a redeemer have been as needful, in view of the claims of divine justice, for the salvation of one sinner as for that of the race? Questions like these have often been answered with a decided affirmative. This has the advantage of seeming precision. But it is possible to construct too rigid a scheme in the name of divine justice. Points like the following need to be kept in mind: 1. In the recovery of a lapsed soul, grace must take the initiative. A full atonement cannot be made by the culprit, as being always obligated to render his best service. Atonement by another than the culprit cannot take the place of grace since the atonement must be provided or accepted by an exercise of free grace. 2. It follows then that, if lapsed souls are recovered, free grace is in fact exercised, and hence is not in itself incompatible with justice. 3. What justice requires is that grace should not be administered in a way that shall disparage the claims or endanger the interests of righteousness. 4. There is nothing arbitrary in the supposition that a scheme of such vast consequence as the proclamation of universal amnesty to a race of sinners must appear in the sight of omniscience as disparaging to the claims of righteousness and perilous to its interests, unless these claims and interests should be emphasized by the very method in which the amnesty is published and made effective, that is, by the method of atonement. 5. As atonement does not exclude grace, but rather concerns the method and conditions of its administration, it is conceivable that in connection with some lesser exigency than the one supposed, for example, the recovery of a single lapsed soul, the grace might be applied apart from a special objective atonement, applied simply as illuminating and subduing influence, working penitence, faith, and love. The sense of ill-desert in such a recovered soul and its loathing for the sins abandoned would be a perpetual tribute to divine justice. Taking that one soul in its relations to God, we have no adequate warrant for saying that

Atonement must be in harmony with all G's motive is love

divine justice must insist upon any other tribute. It is said indeed that God must feel the same about pardoning one soul as about publishing pardon to a race of sinners, and could not make any different conditions for the one case than for the other. But this is hasty assumption. God's feeling respecting a method is determined preëminently by the ethical and spiritual outcome which it is fitted to produce. A method which might answer in dealing with a single soul under special conditions might appear to the divine insight as inefficient and perilous to the ends of righteousness, when applied to the vast and complex theatre of a moral world. We conclude, then, that a normal conception of divine justice leaves room for admitting the need of atonement in connection with a general scheme of pardon and restoration ; but, at the same time, we have little sympathy with the dogmatic assertion that in any conceivable case justice must exclude forgiveness apart from an atonement, such as is associated with the earthly vocation of Christ.

A distinct relation is obviously to be asserted between divine justice and the punishment of sin. Supposing the subject of the infliction not to have reached the stage of incorrigible wickedness, his punishment is not to be regarded as either exclusively retributive or exclusively corrective. It is rather both retributive and corrective, designed to manifest the divine displeasure against sin, and to discipline the sinner into a better life.

The terms in which God's ethical nature was defined above imply that it is wide of the mark to suppose any real opposition between holiness, righteousness, or justice, on the one hand, and love on the other. In a being of limited vision and of imperfect intellectual and emotional balance an opposition of this kind may arise. But in God justice never denies love, and love is never contrary to justice. The punishment which justice asks for defeats no true interest of benevolence, and

the grace which love bestows is not against, but for, the promotion of righteousness. Justice in its perfection cannot be indifferent toward any capacity for good, and love in its perfection can have no complacency in aught that makes for moral evil and consequent injury. Thus divine justice and love are perfectly harmonious. The disjunction which has been pictured between them in many a homiletical strain must be repudiated in a philosophical view.

The love of God takes on different aspects, and is described under different names, according to the relation in which it is presented. Viewed in relation to creatures generally it is goodness, good-will, or benevolence. Viewed in relation to the sinful and rebellious, it is mercy and long-suffering. Viewed in relation to those who are so in affinity with God as properly to be called His children, it is love in the sense of complacency and of spiritual union and communion.

According to its ruling conception, love is a principle or disposition of self-impartation. The loving personality doubtless always covets reciprocity, and in that sense desires possession. But this is in no wise incompatible with the benevolent impulse to self-impartation, since the attitude of responsive love on the part of the object of a holy affection offers the widest channel to the blessing and fruition which the loving personality is ready to contribute, and delights to contribute. With this consideration in view, we may approve the following definition: "Love is God's desire to impart Himself and all good to other beings, and to possess them for His own in spiritual fellowship."[1]

God's love for sinners is a marvel, but not a contradiction. It is marvelous as having the unfathomable depth which pertains to everything in God; it is consistent, however, inasmuch as it regards the possibilities of good in its subjects, the ideals that are in them potentially, the lineaments of the divine

[1] William N. Clarke, An Outline of Christian Theology, p. 88.

workmanship, visible through all the defacements of sin. Speaking of this ground of God's love to sinners, Augustine has remarked: "In a wonderful and divine manner, even when He hated us, He loved us; for he hated us in as far as we were not what He Himself had made; and because our own iniquity had not in every part consumed His work, He knew at once both how, in each of us, to hate what we had done, and to love what He had done."[1]

In nature and ordinary experience there are innumerable things which publish the good will of God toward His creatures. But nature and experience include also much that is dark and enigmatical. They are like a landscape over which many clouds pass. In general, there is a suggestion of light, but sometimes the shadows gather thickly, and threaten to banish all traces of brightness. Some better ground of confidence in the divine goodness than this changeful mirror is needed by the weak and short-sighted children of men. It is, moreover, a rational office of love to make itself known, for in disclosing itself it opens the richest source of blessing for those to whom it is directed. God's love, therefore, was but true to itself, in coming to a full and unmistakable manifestation. Above the plane of changeful circumstances the gospel story sets a mirror into which one may look and be secure of an ever-fresh and victorious assurance that "God is love."

The Old Testament contains abundant references to the goodness and tenderness of God.[2] Scarcely anything more charming could be imagined than some of its delineations of the relation between Jehovah and Israel. But, in the general picture which it presents, justice and judgment share the foreground with mercy and compassion. In the New Testament,

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[1] Tract. in Joan. cx. 6.

[2] Ex. xxxiv. 6, 7; Deut. iv. 29; Job v. 17–19; Ps. xxiii., xxv. 6, xxxvi. 5, 7, lxxxvi. 5, ciii. 8, 13, 17, cviii. 4, cxxi., cxxxvi. 1, cxlv. 8, 9; Isa. lxiii. 9, 16; Lam. iii. 22, 23; Hosea xi. 8; Joel ii. 13; Micah vii. 18; Dan. ix. 9.

on the other hand, the scene of retribution is placed in the background, and the foreground is mostly occupied by the deed of love consummated in Jesus Christ.[1]

IV. — Relation of Will in God to His Nature, and also to the Standard of Truth and Right.

It belongs to the absoluteness of God that He should be indefectible in His moral nature. A holiness that might conceivably fail would be something less than absolute. It would also involve an infinite contradiction to the perfect knowledge of God to admit in Him any liability to the foolishness and lying vanity of sin.

This thought lies near to the problem of the relation of will to nature in God. How is that relation to be conceived? Evidently all thought of temporal antecedence should be excluded. Nature and will are both eternal. But, in the logical order, nature stands first. While there is nothing like mechanical determination, the will finds its perfect standard in the intellectual and ethical nature of God. It is the requirement of harmony and self-consistency that the will should always follow this standard. Indeed, the will would forsake its own absolute choice, should it swerve in the least from that standard, since, undoubtedly, it has elected the same to be eternally its rule of conduct.

As in the personal life of men there is a union of necessity and freedom, so also in God. The ground of our rational and moral being is given us. Nevertheless we are not actually rational and moral persons apart from will or self-determination in rational and moral lines. The same is true of God. "At every point the absolute will must be present to give

[1] Matt. i. 21, xxvi. 28; Luke ii. 10, 11, xv.; John i. 12, iii. 16, xii. 32; Rom. v. 8; 2 Cor. viii. 9; Eph. i. 7, ii. 4–8, iii. 19; Phil. ii. 6–8; 1 Pet. i. 9–12, 18, 19; 1 John iv. 9, 10, 16.

meaning to the otherwise powerless necessities of the Divine Being." [1]

Since the will of God never decrees aught but truth and right, there can never be any practical occasion for His creatures to seek any other standard. But, speculatively, the divine will must be regarded as executive, rather than creative, of truth and right. This does not mean that they are beyond God; for beyond Him there is absolutely nothing, and consequently neither truth nor error, neither right nor wrong. It means, rather, that truth and right express the rational and ethical nature of God. As implications of that nature they must appear, according to the tenor of the preceding discussion, logically prior to the determinations of the divine will. It does not lie within the province of that will to make or to unmake them. In this relation, the conclusion of Thomas Aquinas is much to be preferred to that of Duns Scotus and Descartes.

A thought supplementary to the matter of the foregoing sections may fitly be added. The divine interest may be regarded as being extended in full measure to the æsthetical domain. God is fountain and patron of the beautiful as well as of the right. Poetic sensibility and artistic gift have in Him their unfailing source.

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[1] Bowne, Philosophy of Theism, p. 170.

CHAPTER II.

TRINITARIAN DISTINCTIONS IN THE GODHEAD.

I. — The Historical Data for the Divinity of Christ.

The discussion of the divine attributes has emphasized the necessity of affirming distinctions in God. Sound philosophy has no objection to the scriptural implication that a certain manifoldness, along with unity, is characteristic of the Divine Being; indeed it concludes that He must be thus conceived in a consistent representation of Him as living and self-conscious Spirit. Whether philosophy, in its explication of the general idea of God, can draw out precisely that theory of necessary distinctions which is expressed in the Christian doctrine of the Trinity, is not so clear. At any rate, the doctrine of the Trinity has an historical basis, and is best approached from that side. Whatever word philosophy may have to offer on the subject is properly postponed till a review has been made of the historical data.

The chief compendium of historical evidence in this relation is, of course, the New Testament. But it will not be impertinent to glance somewhat beyond the New Testament era, since the order of teaching which followed, if it appears relatively continuous and dominant, may be regarded as testifying to the dogmatic impulse which was received from the apostles and their colaborers. In the first place, we have to note the chain of testimony as it relates to the divinity of Christ. This we will follow in the regress order from the fourth century.

As is well known, the specific task of the first ecumenical

council was the solemn declaration of the divinity of Christ. The creed which was subscribed at Nicæa in 325 was designed to put the ban upon the Arian doctrine — which assigned Christ an intermediate rank between God and man, defining Him as the first and most exalted of creatures — and to bind the whole Church to the acknowledgment of the consubstantiality of the Son with the Father. If the necessity of promulgating the creed proves that there was doubt respecting the divinity of the Son, the composition of the council shows that the doubt was far from representing the central current in the theology of the age. Out of the three hundred and eighteen bishops only seventeen were Arians,[1] and all but two of these seventeen were prevailed upon to sign the creed. It is true that in the contentions which followed the dissolution of the council it became apparent that a considerable fraction of the Eastern bishops favored what has been termed the Semi-Arian scheme. In estimating the significance of the Semi-Arian party, however, several facts should be borne in mind: namely, that it had very few cordial or voluntary adherents in the Latin Church; that the divergence of some of its members from the Nicene platform was rather technical than real, their dissatisfaction with the creed being due to what they regarded as its Sabellian implications; and that the party as a whole commonly repudiated in its councils the Arian doctrine of the creaturely rank of the Son. In fact, the position of the Semi-Arian party was not so much a testimony against faith in the possession by the Son of an essentially divine rank and of divine predicates, as a testimony in favor of conjoining a distinct recognition of the subordination of the Son with the idea of His divinity. As for the Arian party, the seeming prominence which it attained, especially in the reign of Valens, was due largely to imperial force and patronage; and the speedy collapse of the party, after the withdrawal of this artificial

[1] Sozomen, Hist. Eccl. i. 20.

basis, illustrates clearly the alien character of its creed. In general, if we eliminate the effect of extraneous causes, we must conclude that the broad central current of the theology of the fourth century was in the direction of acknowledging in Christ an essentially divine rank and nature. Notwithstanding the great commotion which it raised, Arianism was nothing more than a dogmatic eccentricity.

In the third century the theoretical construction of some of the fathers may not have been fully on a level with the Nicene creed; but all through the century the mind of the Church in general was evidently pervaded with the conviction that truly divine predicates belong to Christ. There is no evidence that the humanitarian theory represented by Paul of Samosata and some less conspicuous predecessors, according to which Christ was only a man peculiarly replenished with the grace and power of the Holy Spirit, had any large following. It was a local and limited form of monarchian or antitrinitarian teaching. Moreover, the fact that a contrasted form of monarchianism, known as the Sabellian — which acknowledged only a Trinity of manifestations, and conceived of Christ as the unipersonal God incarnate — appeared at the same time, suggests that both got their incentive, not from the antecedent standpoint of the Church, but from a speculative ambition to evade the difficulties of a trinitarian hypothesis. In any event, as these dogmatic eccentricities were contrary to one another, the former making the centre of personality in Christ purely human, and the latter regarding it as the sole Divine Being, the one offsets the other so far as faith in Christ's divinity is concerned. We are thus left free to regard the party which vanquished both the Samosatian and the Sabellian schemes as representing, with but moderate abatement, the theological thinking of the third century.[1]

[1] Expressions from the writings of Tertullian and Origen have sometimes been thought to testify to a wide diffusion of the Sabellian (or Patripassian) way of thinking. But Tertullian's language (Adv. Prax. ii., iii.) seems to belong with the

Examining the writings of leading representatives of this party we find that if they did not uniformly limit the subordination of the Son as consistently as did the Nicene fathers, they were no less resolute in assigning to Him a truly divine nature and rank. This appears in the letter addressed by Hymenæus of Jerusalem and his five colleagues to Paul of Samosata. They affirmed that in conformity with the faith handed down and preserved in the Catholic Church to their day, they confessed Jesus Christ to be the only begotten Son of God, the image of the invisible God, "being before all worlds, not God according to foreknowledge, but in substance and in person (οὐσίᾳ καὶ ὑποστάσει) God, Son of God."[1]

Origen also witnessed to faith in the possession of truly divine predicates by the Son. While he conceived that Christ was below the Father as having a divinity derived from Him, he yet assumed that true divinity in its cardinal aspects was possessed by the Son. Among his descriptions we find such sentences as these: "He whom we regard and believe to have been from the beginning God and the Son of God, is the very Logos, and the very Wisdom and the very Truth."[2] "Our Saviour does not partake of righteousness, but being Himself righteousness, He is partaken of by the righteous."[3] "All things belonging to God are in Him. Christ is the wisdom of God, He Himself is the power of God, He Himself the right-

uncritical exaggerating expressions to which he was not wholly a stranger. In speaking of Praxeas as the first to teach the Patripassian doctrine at Rome, and as a pretender of yesterday, he has himself indicated that his broad statement about the simple-minded being stumbled over trinitarian terminology, is not to be taken as a proper measure of the attitude of contemporary Christians toward the trinitarian idea. As for Origen, he simply made the indefinite remark, that many were disposed to deny either the personal distinction or the divinity of the Son. (In Joan. Tom. II. 2.) This does not necessarily imply anything more than that there was an appreciable number who took one or the other alternative. Such a style of remark could have been employed even were it understood that the number of those entertaining the trinitarian faith was many times that of their opponents.

[1] Routh, Reliquiae Sacrae, Vol. III. pp. 289–299.

[2] Cont. Cel. iii. 41. [3] *Ibid.* vi. 64.

eousness of God."[1] He is omnipresent, so that His coming to men involved no abandonment of the seat previously occupied.[2] He is also omniscient. The secrets of men's hearts are open to Him. "Thou, O Son of God, who knowest all things, knowest what is in man."[3]

In the same century Novatian very distinctly imputed to Christ a truly divine nature, as appears from such sentences as the following: "Scripture as much announces Christ as also God, as it announces God Himself as man. . . . Because He is with us He is called Emmanuel, that is, God with us. . . . If, whereas, it is the property of none but God to know the secrets of the heart, Christ beholds the secrets of the heart; and if, whereas, it belongs to none but God to remit sins, the same Christ remits sins, reasonably Christ is God."[4] Hippolytus taught that the "Logos is God, being substance of God." He also spoke of Christ, the incarnate Logos, as "the God above all," as "God the Word who came down from heaven," and as "the impassible Word of God," who needed to assume flesh in order to become subject to suffering.[5] Tertullian contended that Christ is at once truly God and truly man; that like the Father He is omnipotent and omnipresent; that, as the stream is of the same substance as the fountain, He is of the same substance as the Father. "He proceeds forth from God, and in that procession He is generated, so that He is the Son of God, and is called God from unity of substance with God."[6] The testimony in fact is ample, and there is very little occasion for doubt as to the direction of the current in the third century.[7]

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[1] In Jer. Hom. viii. 2.
[2] Cont. Cel. iv. 5, v. 12.
[3] In Joan. Tom. x. 30.
[4] De Trin. xi–xiii.
[5] Philos. x. 29, 30; Adv. Noet. xv., xvii.
[6] Adv. Prax. ii., xvii. 23, xxiii.; Apol. xxi.

[7] "By the end of the third century there can no longer have been any considerable number of outlying communities where the doctrines of the preëxistence of Christ and the identity of this preëxistent One with the Divine Logos, were not recognized as the orthodox belief." (Harnack, History of Dogma, Eng. edit., II. 38.)

As in the third century we note the two contrasted schemes, the Samosatian and the Sabellian, outside the central current, so also in the second century we have the two opposing modes of thought, Ebionism and Gnosticism. The former subordinated the new of Christianity to the old of Judaism; the latter cumbered Christian tenets with materials drawn from Gentile philosophies and religions. As respects extent of influence, Ebionism was undoubtedly a very scanty factor in the latter part of the century; nor can much scope be imputed to it in the earlier portion of the century, except by resort to an arbitrary shifting of the New Testament writings from their probable date, and an equally arbitrary ignoring of the tenor of the post-apostolic literature. It is certainly no Ebionite Church which is mirrored in the mass of the New Testament writings, or in the literature of either half of the century. Gnosticism was a more important factor than Ebionism. But, since it was characterized in general by intemperate speculation and dogmatic eccentricity, its doctrine of Christ's person can neither be regarded as representative of its own age nor as largely significant of the foregoing standpoint of the Church. As related to the Ebionite christology, the Gnostic was not so distinctly and uniformly an offset as the Sabellian theory was to the Samosatian. Still it was in general strongly contrasted therewith. If many of the Ebionites conceived of Christ as simply a man specially endowed by the Holy Ghost for an extraordinary mission, the more noted founders of Gnostic sects regarded Him as distinctly of a superhuman order, an emanation from the Supreme Being, a specialization in the first rank of the divine essence.

Over against the small and wavering Ebionite sect and the shifting schools of the Gnostics, there was a dominant theological tendency in the second century which was manifested in a steadfast representation of Christ as the unique Son of God and the possessor of divine attributes. Ample witness of this tendency is found in Clement of Alexandria and in

Irenæus at the end of the second century, in Justin Martyr and his co-apologists in the middle portion of the century, and in the apostolic fathers who wrote in the first decades of the century. We may admit that some of these writers, like some of those in the third century, did not so carefully and consistently limit the subordination of the Son as did the Nicene fathers. But this signifies little else than the fact that the speculative elaboration of a trinitarian theory had not yet wrought out the most suitable formulas ; it does not deny the warrant for concluding that the image of Christ which was in the minds and hearts of the writers of this era was that of a being possessing divine rank and attributes.

Clement of Alexandria described Christ as being "both God and man," "the living God who suffered and is adored," "the Divine Word, He that is truly most manifest Deity, He that is made equal to the Lord of the universe," "God in the form of man," "The Commander-in-chief of the universe." He said also of the Son, "He is wisdom, and knowledge, and truth." "For Him to make any addition to His knowledge is absurd, since He is God." He is likewise above the limitations of space. "From His own point of view the Son of God is never displaced; not being divided, not severed, not passing from place to place; being always everywhere and contained nowhere; seeing all things, hearing all things, knowing all things."[1] In the writings of Irenæus we find an equivalent strain. Christ is characterized by him as the Founder, and Framer, and Maker of all things ; as the Saviour of all, and the Ruler of heaven and earth; as the measure of the immeasurable Father ; as having been always with the Father, and having glorified Him before all creation; as both God and man, since He forgave as God and suffered as man.[2] In the "rule of faith," which he represents as held by the Church

[1] Cohort. i. x.; Paed. i. 2, 6, 8; Strom. iv. 25, vii. 2.

[2] Cont. Haer. i. 15. 5, iii. 9. 3, iii. 11. 2, iv. 4. 2, iv. 14. 1, iv. 20. 3, v. i. 3, v. 17. 3.

dispersed throughout the world, Christ is spoken of as "our Lord, and God, and Saviour, and King."[1]

Justin Martyr, opposing Jewish scepticism, contended that the Old Testament exhibits Christ as "one, who is both Angel, and God, and Lord, and man," and in repeated instances applied to Him the Divine name.[2] Athenagoras evidently placed the Son within the circle of the Godhead proper, for he described the Christians as those "Who speak of God the Father, and of God the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, and who declare both their power in union and their distinction in order."[3] Theophilus of Antioch represented Christ as the Word who was always present with the Father, as begotten before all creatures, as the agent by whom all things were made, as the Divine Person who walked in Paradise, as God from God.[4]

Since the writings of the apostolic fathers are mainly practical treatises, we should expect in them references to Christ's office and work rather than precise and formal definitions of His nature. Nevertheless, they are not without tributes to His divine dignity. They assume in common His preëxistence, and, in not a few instances, assign to Him a rank which greatly transcends the creaturely plane. The Epistle to Diognetus teaches that the invisible God did not send a servant or an angel to men, "but the very Creator and Fashioner of all things. . . . As a king sends his son, who is also a king, so sent He Him; as God, ὡς θεὸν, He sent Him."[5] The Epistle of Barnabas speaks of Christ as "Lord of all the world," and says there was good reason why He manifested Himself under the veil of the flesh; otherwise, men could not have endured to behold Him, their eyes being blinded even by the natural sun, which is the work of His hands.[6] In the Pastor of Hermas the Son is described as older than all creatures, and a "fellow-councillor with the Father in the work of creation."

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[1] Cont Haer. i. 10. 1.

[2] Dial. cum. Tryph. lix. Compare xxxiv., xlviii., lx., lxi., cxxvi., cxxviii.

[3] Legat. x. [4] Ad Autol. ii. 10, 22. [5] Chap. vii. [6] Chap. v.

His name, it is also said, "is great and cannot be contained, and supports the whole world."[1] The Epistle of Polycarp represents Christ as joint source with the Father of every spiritual grace, and as enthroned over the universe. "To Him all things in heaven and earth are subject."[2] Ignatius, the martyr Bishop of Antioch, gives this exalted description of Christ: "There is one Physician who is possessed of both flesh and spirit; both made and not made; God existing in flesh; true life in death; both of Mary and of God; first passible and then impassible, — even Jesus Christ our Lord."[3] The Teaching of the Twelve Apostles apparently refers to Christ as the God of David, and applies to Him words from the Old Testament which in their original relation were spoken of Jehovah.[4] Clement of Rome says of Christ: "By Him are the eyes of our hearts opened. By Him our foolish and darkened understanding blossoms up anew towards His marvellous light. By Him the Lord has willed that we should taste of immortal knowledge, 'who, being the brightness of His majesty, is by so much greater than the angels, as He hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they.'"[5] Clement uses, moreover, language having such trinitarian suggestions as the following: "For as God liveth, and the Lord Jesus Christ liveth, and the Holy Spirit, who are the faith and the hope of the elect, so surely shall he. who with lowliness of mind hath performed the ordinances and commandments that are given by God, be enrolled and have a name among the number of them that are saved through Jesus Christ, through whom is the glory unto Him for ever and ever, Amen."[6]

Thus the chain of testimony reaches back from the fourth century to the very verge of the apostolic era. Even if it is not uniformly indicative of precisely the same conception of

[1] Simil. ix. 12, 14. [2] Chapters ii., xii.
[3] Ad Eph. vii. Compare Ad Mag. viii., Ad Tral. vii., Ad Rom. iii.
[4] x. 6, xvi. 7. [5] 1 Epist. Ad Cor. xxxvi. [6] 1 Epist. Ad Cor. lviii

the relation of the Son to the Father as was championed by Athanasius and embodied in the Nicene creed, it must still be regarded as indicative of faith in the Son as possessed of divine rank and attributes.[1]

We have now to look into the New Testament to determine how far the presumption that this line of testimony to Christ's divinity was based on apostolic teaching finds a suitable corroboration. In scanning the New Testament books it will be proper to continue the regress order which has been pursued. The historical succession of these books, it is true, is not altogether ascertained, but we may group them with a fair degree of assurance. As the latest writings we have the fourth Gospel and the Epistles of John; next to these we may place the Apocalypse and the Epistle to the Hebrews; very nearly contemporary with these two, though based in part on earlier written memorials, we have the Synoptical Gospels, to which the Book of Acts may be added; the later Pauline Epistles, together with those of Peter and James, may take the next place; and finally we reach the earlier Epistles of Paul.

By way of preface to this graduated review, it may be noted that the application to Christ of terms belonging to the human or creaturely scale does not necessarily imply a purely humanitarian theory of His person. This is evident from the consideration that the very writers, who are most clear and emphatic in assigning to Christ a dignity immeasurably transcending the human scale, apply to Him in some connections the order of terms in question. They could not well avoid it altogether without hiding from their view that life in which

[1] Harnack was cited above on the belief dominant at the end of the third century. This is what he says for the primitive era of dogmatic development; "The earliest tradition not only spoke of Jesus as *κύριος*, *σωτήρ*, and *διδάσκαλος*, but as *ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ*, and this name was firmly adhered to in the Gentile Christian communities. It followed immediately from this that Jesus belongs to the sphere of God, and that, as is said in the earliest preaching known to us, one must think of Him *ὡς περὶ θεοῦ*." (History of Dogma, I. 186.)

the Son of God, though He was before all things, appeared as a man among men.

The opening verses of John's Gospel contain a positive assertion of Christ's divinity. The declaration that the "Word became flesh" identifies the subject of the foregoing description beyond all shadow of reasonable doubt with Jesus Christ. It is, therefore, declared of Him that in His higher nature He was in the beginning; that He was with God; that He was God; that all things were made by Him; that He had life in Himself, which life was the light of men; that being thus the maker of the world and the source of universal illumination, He came into the world, and gave power to as many as received Him to become the sons of God. Certainly, if the author had meant to affirm preëxistence reaching back into eternity, divinity, and personality, he would have needed no more emphatic terms than those which he employed.[1] According to some interpreters, John has given in his First Epistle an equally clear assertion of Christ's divinity in the following words: "We know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding; that we know Him that is true, and we are in Him that is true, even in His Son, Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life."[2] Grammatically, it is admissible to connect the concluding statement with the Son, and thus to see in it an unequivocal assertion of His divinity. But it is also possible to connect the clause with the pronoun referring to the Father. The uncertainty of the reference makes the passage much less available than the prologue to the Gospel.

Scarcely secondary to the positive assertion of Christ's divine rank is the evidence which is supplied by His consciousness of a peculiar relation to the Father. In that conscious-

[1] A speculation as to the source — Philonic, Hellenic, or Biblical — whence John derived the term *Logos*, has little pertinence. His adaptation of it to express a Christian tenet is the important matter, and this is not ambiguous.

[2] 1 John v. 20.

ness, it is true, whether through the blending of the human with the divine, or as a necessary result of sonship even in a divine range, there was a certain recognition of subordination. The formal expression of this appears in the words, "The Father is greater than I."[1] But, with this sense of subordination, there is evinced, on the other hand, a lofty consciousness of complete copartnership with the Father. Even in declaring Himself less than the Father, Christ makes a comparison which could not be dictated by an ordinary human consciousness. How far He was above the plane of such a consciousness is revealed in sentences like these: "The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into His hand. . . . My Father worketh even until now, and I work. . . . As the Father raiseth the dead, and quickeneth them, even so the Son also quickeneth whom He will. For neither doth the Father judge any man, but He hath given all judgment unto the Son: that all may honor the Son, even as they honor the Father. . . . I and the Father are one. . . . He that hath seen me hath seen the Father. . . . All things whatsoever the Father hath are mine."[2]

A third evidence is contained in the ascription to Christ of functions or attributes which reach into a divine plane. In His own words, as reported by John, a hint is given of His transcendence of the limitations of space and time. "No man hath ascended into heaven, but He that descended out of heaven, even the Son of Man, which is in heaven."[3] "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am."[4] His ability to penetrate the secrets of men's hearts, and to forecast the future, is affirmed in these positive terms: "Jesus did not trust Himself unto them, for that He knew all men, and be-

[1] John xiv. 28.

[2] John iii. 35, v. 17, 21–23, x. 30, xiv. 9, xvi. 15. Compare 1 John ii. 23, iv. 15, v. 20.

[3] John iii. 13.

[4] John viii. 58. For an answer to attempts to explain away the Johannine thought of the personal pre-existence of the Son, see George B. Stevens, Theology of the New Testament, pp. 205–211.

cause He needed not that any one should bear witness concerning man; for He Himself knew what was in man." [1] "Jesus knew, from the beginning, who they were that believed not, and who it was that should betray Him." [2] With equal emphasis is declared His mastery over the conditions of life and blessing. "Jesus said unto her: I am the resurrection and the life: he that believeth on Me, though he die, yet shall he live." [3] "Whatsoever ye shall ask, in My name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If ye shall ask Me anything in My name, that will I do." [4] A preëminent dignity is also indicated in the relation which the coming and the work of the Holy Spirit sustain to Christ. "When the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of Truth, which proceedeth from the Father, He shall bear witness of Me." [5] The words, "whom I will send unto you," bespeak the divinity of Christ by all the strength of argument which revelation supplies for the divinity of the Holy Spirit.

A fourth evidence in this group of Johannine writings is supplied by the very emphatic terms in which the spiritual dependence of men upon Christ is affirmed. Where the worth of divinity is predicated, congruity of thinking calls for the fact of divinity. But certainly the worth of divinity is assigned to the person of Christ in such sentences as these: "He that believeth on the Son hath eternal life; but he that obeyeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him. . . . I am the light of the world; he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life. . . . If the Son shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed. . . . I am the way, the truth, and the life; no man cometh unto the Father, but by me. . . . I am the vine, ye are the branches. He that abideth in me, and I in Him, the same beareth much fruit: for apart from me ye can do nothing. If a man

[1] John ii. 24, 25.
[2] John vi. 64.
[3] John xi. 25.
[4] John xiv. 13, 14.
[5] John xv. 26.

abide not in me he is cast forth as a branch and is withered. . . . The witness is this, that God gave unto us eternal life, and this life is in His Son; he that hath the Son hath life; he that hath not the Son hath not life. . . . Grace, mercy, and peace shall be with us from God the Father, and from Jesus Christ the Son of the Father in truth and love." [1]

Once more it is to be noticed of these writings that they record no check upon a worshipful attitude toward Christ. The blind man, whose sight was restored, was not rebuked for worshipping Christ, nor was Thomas required to amend his words when he exclaimed, "My Lord, and my God." [2]

Passing to the second group of New Testament writings we find here also ample tribute to the divine rank of Christ. In the Apocalypse He is represented as saying to the awe-stricken seer: "I am the first and the last, and the living one," [3] words parallel to those applied to the Most High a little before.[4] He is described as the one "that hath the Seven Spirits of God," [5] a representation equivalent to the declaration that the sources of spiritual life are with Him, or that the Holy Spirit acts as His messenger. He bears the name, "King of kings and Lord of lords." [6] Together with the Father He is the temple and the light of heaven; [7] and He is also joint object with Him of the lofty doxology which is rendered by the universe of creatures." [8]

The opening chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews vies with the prologue to John's Gospel in its ascriptions to the Son. He is portrayed as the heir of all things; the one through whom the worlds were made; the effulgence of God's glory and the very image of His substance; the upholder of all things by the word of His power; an object of worship to all the angels; the bearer of the divine name.[9] In fine, in

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[1] John iii. 36, viii. 12, 36, xiv. 6, xv. 5, 6; 1 John v. 11, 12; 2 John 3.
[2] John ix. 38, xx. 28.
[3] Rev. i. 17.
[4] Rev. i. 8.
[5] Rev. iii. 1.
[6] Rev. xvii. 14, xix. 16.
[7] Rev. xxi. 22, 23.
[8] Rev. v. 11–14, vii. 9, 10.
[9] See also Heb. xii. 2, xiii. 8.

the Apocalypse and the Epistle to the Hebrews the tribute to Christ is found to be on essentially the same plane as in the later Johannine writings.

The Synoptical Gospels, being little else than simple narratives of the words and deeds of Christ, afford for the most part grounds for inference rather than formal statements on the nature of Christ. A historical aim also dominates the Acts. The grounds of inference, however, which these writings afford are not meagre. (1) As has already been illustrated at some length,[1] the union and reconciliation of contrasted attributes in Christ make for Him a rounded character and give Him an appearance of extraordinary personal completeness. This unique character is not indeed a direct proof of divinity proper, but it serves as a ground of such proof in that it bespeaks confidence in the sobriety of Christ's own conceptions of His rank and significance. (2) The titles which Christ bears in these writings are indicative of a divine rank. The voice from heaven pronounces Him the well-beloved Son, and He gives to Himself the title of Son. It is true that He instructs His disciples also to look up to God as the Father in heaven; but never in respect of sonship does He place Himself on a parity with men. The reference is always to *the* Father or *my* Father, and never to *our* Father when His own relation is mentioned. Of similar significance is the use of the term Lord. That it was applicable to Christ, in a sense higher than that which designates any interrelation of men, was intimated by Christ when He reminded the Jews that the Messiah was David's Lord as well as his son. It is to be noticed also that the dying Stephen addressed Jesus as Lord in a relation where we should expect an appeal to no other than a Divine Being. In another passage of the Acts it is declared of Christ that He is Lord of all; and in a still further instance, if the accepted text may be followed, the connection

[1] Part I. Chap. III. Sect. V.

of the clauses imports that the divine name is assigned to Him.[1] (3) The mien of authority assumed by Christ is harmonious with the supposition of his divine dignity. Whether addressing men or commanding the forces of nature, He proceeded as one possessed of conscious mastery.[2] (4) In many instances a positive assertion is recorded of a lordship which transcends the human measure. In the eschatology, generally, of the Synoptical Gospels Christ is portrayed as enthroned in majesty over the world to come, and as determining the lot of men according to their relation to Himself.[3] (5) Very high powers are ascribed to Christ as one who is to baptize with the Holy Spirit, and to work in the disciples with supernatural efficiency.[4] (6) Christ asserts for Himself a wholly exceptional position, an essentially divine relation, in this declaration: "All things have been delivered unto me of my Father; and no one knoweth the Son save the Father; neither doth any know the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son willeth to reveal Him."[5] (7) A divine function is imputed to Christ in that He is said to know the thoughts of men.[6] To be sure it is not asserted formally that He had this knowledge by direct insight; but a comparison of the language of the Synoptists with the more explicit statement of John makes it probable that such was their thought. (8) Christ is represented as claiming the divine prerogative to forgive sins, and as defending the claim in face of the charge of usurpation and blasphemy.[7] (9) Christ promises to be present with His

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[1] See Matt. i. 23, iii. 17, vii. 21, 22, xiv. 33, xxii. 42–45, xxiii. 10, xxvi. 63, 64; Mark ix. 7, xiv. 61, 62; Luke i. 32, ii. 11, ix. 35, xx. 41–44, xxii. 70; Acts iii. 14, 15, vii. 59, ix. 11, 17, x. 36, xx. 28, xxii. 14.

[2] Matt. vii. 29; Mark i. 22, 27, ii. 11, 12; Luke iv. 32, vi. 10, viii. 24, 25.

[3] Matt. x. 32, 33, xvi. 27, xxv. 31–46, xxvi. 63, 64, xxviii. 18; Mark ii. 28; Luke vi 5, xxi. 27, xxii. 69.

[4] Matt. iii. 11; Mark i. 8: Luke xxi, 15, xxiv. 49.

[5] Matt. xi. 27; Luke x. 22.

[6] Matt. ix. 4, xii. 25; Luke ix. 47.

[7] Matt. ix. 2–6; Mark ii. 5–11; Luke v. 20–24.

disciples in terms indicative of a consciousness that it belonged to Him to transcend the circle of finite knowledge and spatial limitations.[1] (10) He receives worship, and rates Himself above temple, Sabbath, men, and angels.[2]

As the list of specifications shows, much the same framework of conceptions runs through the Synoptical Gospels as is found in that of John, the principal difference being that the latter connects more of the element of interpretation, or of explicit theological statement, with its report of Christ's words and deeds.

In the later Pauline Epistles there are several lines of reference to Christ which are indicative of His divine rank. (1.) A universal lordship is ascribed to Him. Paul's favorite name for his Master is "our Lord Jesus Christ." In his thought, the *divine kingdom* and the *kingdom of the Son* are apparently identical terms.[3] He also describes the Son as enthroned far above all creatures, as being to all a proper object of worship, and as the judge of the living and the dead.[4] (2.) Christ is represented as the supreme object of pursuit. Hope and desire are made to centre in Him in a measure which argues that he who reaches Christ reaches the divine.[5] (3.) A divine function is ascribed to Christ in the dispensation of grace. Either grace is referred to Him unqualifiedly, or He is coördinated with the Father as its source.[6] (4.) Christ is designated the mystery of God, in whom are all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge hidden.[7] (5.) He is described as the creator, upholder, and fashioner of all things. "In Him

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[1] Matt. xviii. 20, xxviii. 20.

[2] Matt. xiv. 33; Luke xxiv. 52; Matt. xii. 6, 8, xxiv. 36.

[3] Eph. v. 5; Col. i. 13, iii. 24.

[4] Eph. i. 21, 22; Phil. ii. 10, 11; Col. ii. 10; 2 Tim. iv. 1. Compare James ii. 1; 1 Peter iii. 22.

[5] Phil. i. 21–23, iii. 8, 9; Col. i. 27, iii. 4.

[6] Eph. vi. 23; Phil. i. 2, iv. 23; Col. iii. 4; 1 Tim. i. 1, 2; 2 Tim. i. 2; Titus i. 4; Philemon 3, 25.

[7] Col. ii. 2, 3.

were all things created, in the heavens and upon the earth, things visible and things invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers; all things have been created through Him, and unto Him; and He is before all things, and in Him all things consist."[1] This is obviously a description which reaches beyond the creaturely rank. In the same connection, it is true, Christ is spoken of as the first-born of the creation. But, taken with the context, this epithet must be regarded as rather designed to express Christ's rightful headship and preëminence over creation than to specify His inclusion under the category of created things. In other words, it specifies not essence but relation — a relation of rightful, native lordship. (6.) The divine form is spoken of as appropriate to Christ; all the fullness of the Godhead is said to dwell in Him; and, according to an accepted reading, the divine name is applied to Him.[2]

The earlier Epistles of Paul — including Romans, First and Second Corinthians, Galatians, and the two Epistles to the Thessalonians — afford a line of evidence very nearly equivalent to that contained in the later group. Christ is portrayed in these writings, which were written in the third decade from His death, as the "Lord of glory," "through whom are all things."[3] He is represented as the judge of the race;[4] as the supreme object of aspiration;[5] and as the one foundation of the spiritual edifice.[6] His heavenly preëxistent being is taken for granted.[7] Repeatedly he is spoken of as the source of grace or as joint source with the Father.[8] The indwelling of Christ is described in terms which import that it means nothing less than the habitation and operation of the divine in

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[1] Col. i. 16, 17, Phil. iii. 20, 21. [2] Phil. ii. 6; Col. ii. 9; Titus ii. 13.
[3] 1 Cor. ii. 8, viii. 6. Compare 1 Cor. i. 8, iv. 4; 2 Cor. iv. 5; Rom. xv. 30.
[4] 2 Cor. v. 10. [5] 2 Thess. ii. 14. [6] 1 Cor. iii. 11.
[7] Rom. i. 3, ix. 5; 2 Cor. viii. 9; Gal. iv. 4.
[8] 1 Cor. i. 3, 24, x. 4, xvi. 23; 2 Cor. v. 17, xiii. 14; Gal. i. 3, 4, ii. 20, vi. 18; 1 Thess. v. 28; 2 Thess. i. 2; ii. 16, 17, iii. 18; Rom. i. 7, xv. 29, xvi. 20.

man.[1] Finally, it is only the contrast of the expression with Paul's ordinary terminology which stands in the way of assuming that in one instance he styles Christ "God over all, blessed forever."[2] The order of the clauses is rather favorable, than otherwise, to connecting the high ascription with Christ.

The intrinsic relation which, in the total representation of Paul, is predicated of Christ to the world and the whole kingdom of spirits, necessitates the conclusion that 1 Cor. xv. 24–28 describes the cessation of a prominent aspect of official eminence, rather than of lordship itself. These verses are to be taken as meaning that, when the work of reconciliation has been fully accomplished, dependence upon Christ in His *mediatorial* character will recede in favor of a sense of immediate relation with the Father. The Son, *in this aspect*, must fall into a secondary or subject position, as compared with that held in the sight of the subjects of redemption while the work of mediation was in progress. At any rate, if this is not the whole of Paul's meaning, in this connection, he must be regarded as having made here a statement which is out of harmony with other representations of his respecting Christ's standing. In declaring that all things were created through Him, and unto Him, and consist in Him,[3] and in making Christ the object of supreme desire,[4] he ascribes to Him a divine eminence or lordship which cannot rationally be supposed subject to any real abatement.

Such is the field of historic evidence on the subject of Christ's divinity. It is seen that, while there may have been some advance as respects formal construction, there was no revolution in the Church as respects the fundamental view of Christ's person. Substantially the same framework of conceptions is found in each of the early centuries, and in every

[1] Gal. iv. 6; Rom. viii. 9, 10, 15, 16. See also Gal. ii. 20; 2 Cor. xii. 9; Rom. xv. 18, 19.

[2] Rom. ix. 5. [3] Col. i. 16, 17. [4] Phil. iii. 8, 9; Col. iii. 3, 4.

stadium of the apostolic literature. From one end of the line to the other, Christ is set forth as above the human and creaturely plane, in rank, in functions, and in attributes.

A brief reference to the Old Testament might properly have been included in the review of the historical evidence. Many of the fathers saw in the Angel of Jehovah, who is made the bearer of the divine name in several instances,[1] a reference to the Son of God. Paul, in 1 Cor. x. 4, affords an indirect support to their view by the manner in which he connects Christ with the divine ministry to Israel under the earlier dispensation.[2] But, whatever may be made out of the

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[1] Gen. xvi. 10, 13, xxii. 11, 12, xxxi. 11, 13, xxxii. 30; Hosea xii. 3–5; Ex. iii. 2–15; Mal. iii. 1.

[2] That the Angel of Jehovah was in a measure suited to typify the New Testament mediator need not be disputed. It is not at all clear, however, that Old Testament thought, even if it made the Angel more than a creaturely form or agent, regarded him as personally distinct from Jehovah. As examples of the more recent exegesis, we add the following: "As God is thought to appear in varied forms, for example, in the phenomena of the thunderstorm, in the pillar of cloud and of fire, in a glorious effulgence over the tabernacle and the temple, so can He also make men acquainted with His being, and aware of His presence, in the supernatural personal being called angel, without thereby identifying Himself with this personal being. Rather the highest truth which shimmers through this form of representation is that God, though in Himself invisible, still can become mediately visible and apprehensible to men, in individual manifestations, forms, beings; and among these forms and beings an angel is one of the most acceptable and eligible." (Dillmann, Handbuch der altestamentlichen Theologie, p. 327.) "The Angel of Jehovah is not to be interpreted as an uncreated person in angelic form, a person like to God in essence, though personally distinguished from Him (the Logos); nor, according to a more common conception, as an angelic messenger sent forth by God. In essence he belongs undoubtedly to the class of angels, and accordingly distinguishes himself not seldom from Jehovah, and, indeed, in such a way that the disparity between him as a creature and Jehovah, to whom alone divine honor is awarded, is distinctly brought to light. On the other side, however, he is so far the organ of the personal self-revelation of Jehovah, that in general his own angel-personality retreats behind the person of Jehovah, and his appearance is construed only as a visible representation of Jehovah Himself." (Riehm, Alttestamentliche Theologie, p. 160.) "While the various sides of the divine will find expression through angels, the Angel of God is he in whom God makes known to man, for special ends, His whole being and will. The form of manifestation here also is a personal being, who is not God. But what this being is, is of absolutely no con-

peculiar references to the Angel of Jehovah, such a passage as Isa. ix. 6, 7 certainly reads like a presentiment of the coming of one who, in dignity and rank, should greatly transcend human measures. In general, however, the New Testament is so much more specific than the Old on the subject of Christ's person, that there is very slight occasion, in pursuance of a purely dogmatic aim, to go back of its record.

II. — Historical Data for the Divinity and Personality of the Holy Spirit.

The patristic testimony to faith in the divinity and personality of the Holy Spirit was undoubtedly less in volume than that recorded in behalf of the divinity of the Son. It must be conceded, also, that in individual instances a lower view was taken of the Spirit than of the Son. The significance, however, of the first of these points is much qualified by the fact, that the doctrine of the Spirit was in the logical order of development secondary to that of the Son, and so, naturally, was less a subject of direct treatment until the latter had been thoroughly canvassed. As to the second point, the instances of an emphatic subordination of the Spirit are not so numerous as to imply that the trend of Catholic teaching was not decidedly in favor of His divine rank and essence.

The personality of the Spirit was almost universally acknowledged, or assumed, in the early centuries. It is true that Gregory Nazianzen, in the fourth century, spoke of some who regarded the Spirit as a mere activity or energy. But manifestly they had no weight. All the prominent parties of

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sequence. Whether he has a special personal consciousness and will, or whether he has a definite rank or a special name, are matters of no importance to those who receive the revelation. For them he is merely a form of divine revelation; his words are God's words; to look on him is to look on God." (Schultz, Old Testament Theology, II. 223.)

the era, Nicene, Semi-Arian, and Arian, accepted in common the personality of the Holy Spirit. The representative writers of the ante-Nicene period likewise used language which implies that they conceived of the Holy Spirit as personal.[1]

The acknowledgment of the divinity of the Holy Spirit was nearly parallel with that of His personality. Eusebius of Cæsarea may have taught a subordination of the Spirit that ill agrees with the proper notion of divinity, and one or two sentences of Origen may make questionable his consistency in placing the Holy Spirit within the circle of the Godhead. But it is certain that the foremost champions of the Nicene doctrine of the Son taught also the consubstantiality of the Holy Spirit with the Father.[2] The nature of the Spirit is treated in the so-called creed of Constantinople less definitely than in their writings; but it requires no strained interpretation to discover in the following language an ascription of divinity: "We believe in the Holy Ghost who is Lord and Giver of Life, who proceedeth from the Father, who with the Father and the Son together is worshipped and glorified, who spake by the prophets."

The view which found expression in these terms was no innovation. The "rule of faith" testifies that in the consciousness of the ante-Nicene Church a divine rank was accorded to the Holy Spirit. In Origen's version of the rule we read: "The apostles related that the Holy Spirit was associated in honor and dignity with the Father and the Son."[3] An exaltation of the Spirit to the same plane of divine honor appears

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[1] Origen, In Ioan. Tom. ii. 6; Novatian, De Trin. xvi., xxix.; Hippolytus, Adv., Noet. viii., xii.; Tertullian, Adv. Prax. i., viii., ix., xii.; Clement of Alexandria, Paed. i. 6, Strom. v. 14; Irenæus, Cont. Haer. iv. 20; Athenagoras, Legat. x.; Justin Martyr, 1 Apol. vi., xiii.; Ignatius, Ad. Magnes. xiii.; Clement of Rome, First Epist. ad Cor. lviii.

[2] Athanasius, Epistolae ad Serapion; Cyril of Jerusalem, Catech. vi. 6, viii. 5, xvi. 3, 4, 22; Basil, Adv. Eunom. iii. 1; Gregory Nazianzen, Orat. xxxi. 9; Gregory of Nyssa, De Communibus Nominibus; Ambrose, De Spir. Sanct. i. 2, 5, 7, 12, iii. 16.

[3] De Prin. Praef.

in the references of leading writers. "A man," says Hippolytus, "even though he will it not, is compelled to acknowledge God the Father Almighty, and Christ Jesus, the Son of God, who being God became man, to whom also the Father made all things subject, Himself excepted, and the Holy Spirit [excepted]. . . . We see the Word incarnate, and we know the Father by Him, and we believe in the Son, and we worship the Holy Spirit."[1] Tertullian, contending that Father, Son, and Spirit are distinct and inseparable, writes: "Everything which proceeds from something else must needs be second to that from which it proceeds, without being on that account separated. Where, however, there is a second, there must be two; and where there is a third there must be three. Now the Spirit indeed is third from God and the Son, just as the fruit of the tree is third from the root. . . . Although I must everywhere hold one only substance in three coherent and inseparable [Persons], yet I am bound to acknowledge from the necessity of the case, that He who issues a command is different from Him who executes it."[2] Irenæus says: "With Him [God the Father] were always present the Word and Wisdom, the Son and the Spirit, by whom and in whom, freely and spontaneously, He made all things, to whom also He speaks, saying, 'Let us make man after our image and likeness.'"[3] The words of Clement of Rome, "as God liveth, and the Lord Jesus Christ liveth, and the Holy Spirit, who are the faith and hope of the elect,"[4] indicate that a divine rank was assigned to the Spirit.

The trend of early patristic teaching cannot, therefore, be regarded as doubtful. But were that trend less clearly defined than it is, the doctrine of the Holy Spirit would not lack the needful data, at least as regards the main points. The New Testament in an abundant list of passages plainly refers to the Holy Spirit works of intelligence, and such works of in-

[1] Adv. Noet. viii., xii.
[2] Adv. Prax. viii., xii.
[3] Cont. Haer. iv. 20.
[4] First Epist. ad Cor. lvii.

telligence as manifestly belong to a divine rather than to a creaturely range.[1] In many of these passages, it is true, the personal agent who is back of the works is not so fully distinguished but that "the Holy Spirit" might be regarded as standing for God acting in a special way, or within a special sphere; in other words, as denoting God in a particular order of manifestations, rather than a distinct person in the Godhead. But there are a number of passages which cannot be construed in the former sense with any appearance of propriety. Not only in John's discourse about the Comforter,[2] but also in the baptismal formula,[3] and in various sentences of the Epistles,[4] the Spirit is coördinated with the Father and the Son in a manner which implies distinct personality.

The verbal affiliation of 2 Cor. iii. 17 with the view that the Spirit may be identified with Christ in His pneumatic nature cannot properly be quoted against a trinitarian conception. The expression ὁ κύριος τὸ πνεῦμά ἐστιν is to be understood with reference to the contrast to Moses which the apostle is portraying. As Moses can be called the γράμμα in so far as that which was mediated by him is a writing now inclosed in the letter — Moses, says the apostle, is read — so is the Lord the Spirit in so far as He is the source of the constant life-movement which is the distinctive character of the Church.[5]

The fact that the Holy Spirit is sometimes referred to as a gift is no insuperable bar to the supposition of personality. The Son is also spoken of as a gift. The term "outpouring" in relation to the Spirit is parallel to that of "sending" in relation to the Son. Nothing but the crassest literalism will

[1] Matt. x. 20; Mark xiii. 11; Luke xii. 11, 12; John xiv. 16, 17, 26, xvi. 7–13; Acts i. 16, ii. 4, v. 32. x. 19, xiii. 2, xvi. 6, xx. 23; Rom. viii. 14–16, 26, 27; 1 Cor. ii. 10, 11, xii. 3–11, 1 John v. 7, 8.

[2] John xiv. 16, 17, 26, xvi. 7–13.

[3] Matt. xxviii. 19.

[4] Eph. ii. 18, 22, iv. 4–6; 1 Cor. xii. 4–6; 2 Cor. xiii. 14; 1 Pet. i. 2.

[5] Frank, System der Christlichen Wahrheit, I. 211.

see in either anything more than a description of a vocation fulfilled in accordance with the will of the Father.

The ascription to the Holy Spirit of works of divine intelligence and the grievousness of the sin against Him[1] give adequate proof of His divinity. The evidence from Christian consciousness is also unequivocal. A clear perception of what is involved in the sanctification of a sinful soul inevitably begets the conviction that no work can be more divine than this, and that, consequently, its agent cannot be less than divine. Indeed, no question can rationally be made about the divinity of the Holy Spirit. His distinct personality can be the only subject of inquiry either on the plane of New Testament teaching or on that of a truly Christian consciousness.

The Old Testament ascribes divine functions and attributes to the Spirit;[2] but, as in general it gives only hints in the direction of a trinitarian theory, the evidence which it affords for the distinct personality of the Spirit falls quite below that contained in the New Testament.

III. — Extent to which the Historical Data Afford Ground for a Definite Trinitarian Theory.

New Testament language in a number of instances is formally trinitarian, mention being made in the same connection of Father, Son, and Spirit, as if distinct, and yet most intimately related.[3] Still, the evidence which most compels to a trinitarian theory is the whole line of reference to Christ in the New Testament, together with the trend of early patristic teaching, and the whole line of reference to the Holy Spirit.

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[1] Matt. xii. 31, 32; Mark iii. 28, 29; Luke xii. 10; Acts v. 3, 9; Eph. iv. 30.

[2] Job xxxiii. 4; Ps. civ. 30, cxxxix. 7; Ezek. xxxvi. 27, xxxvii. 14; Isa. xi. 2, xlviii. 16, lxiii. 10; Gen. vi. 3; Ps. li. 11.

[3] John xiv. 16, 17, 26, xvi. 7–13; 1 Cor. xii. 4–6; 2 Cor. xiii. 14; Eph. ii. 18, 22, iv. 4–6; 1 Pet. i. 2.

The pervasive representation, entering into the very warp and woof of the New Testament, respecting the functions, attributes, and works of the Son and the Spirit, was and is and always will be the substantial ground of trinitarianism. As Dorner has remarked, "The Christian idea of God, historically regarded, is decidedly the trinitarian." [1] Contemporary philosophy may have provided the early fathers in some measure with instrumentalities for their dogmatic construction ; but the historical data which were before them constituted the main ground for their trinitarian theory, and apart from Platonism, or other philosophy, the same ground is likely to be effective in any age that is characterized at once by faith in revelation and by a constructive bent. Even modern Unitarianism pays tribute to the perennial force of this historic incentive when it declares, by the mouth of an eminent representative, that the doctrine of Father, Son, and Spirit is the distinguishing feature of Christianity, "indispensable to any right and worthy conception of Deity": [2] or when it affirms through another of its writers, "The gospel-revelation does distribute the whole working force and efficiency of the gospel-truth and power under the three divine methods or agencies, assigned respectively to the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. That Trinity in unity is in the gospel. It is the gospel." [3]

In construing the historical data no further reference is needed to trinitarianism of the Arian type, since that is refuted by all the evidence which has been given for the proper divinity of the Son and the Spirit. A reference to the Sabellian hypothesis is more in place. It will not require, however, any extended consideration. Its contention that Father, Son, and Spirit denote successive forms of manifestation on the part of the one Divine Person contradicts the New Testament

[1] System of Christian Doctrine, § 29.

[2] F. H. Hedge, Unitarian Affirmations.

[3] Geo. E. Ellis, Discourse on the Christian Trinity.

thought of fellowship between Father and Son, as also the representation of associated action on the part of Father, Son, and Spirit. For like reasons any scheme whatever of simple modalism can obtain no secure foothold. If personal distinctions are to be abolished, what meaning can be attached to the declaration, that the Word which became incarnate was in the beginning with God? On the same ground what intelligible sense can be found for the prayer of the incarnated Son to be glorified with the glory which He had with the Father before the world was? What could Paul have meant when he spoke of the vast renunciation of the One who being in the form of God counted it not a prize to be on an equality with God? What again did the apostle mean when he spoke of his Lord as the Son of God's love, the firstborn of the creation, through whom all things were made? What imports the whole strain on the position and relation of the Son recorded in the first chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews? What mean baptismal formula, salutation, benediction, and promise, in which Son and Spirit are co-ordinated with the Father? Only a species of exegetical desperation can undertake to harmonize these representations with any scheme of simple modalism.

Assuming that the trinitarian conception, in the sense of real, permanent, and personal distinctions in the Godhead, is imbedded in revelation, we have still several questions of fact to consider. The main inquiries concern these points: (1) whether the term Son is expressive of pre-temporal and necessary relations between the Divine Persons: (2) whether in the Scriptures procession is affirmed of the Spirit in anything more than an economic sense; (3) the extent of the subordination which is legitimately predicated of the Son and the Spirit.

As the Bible is not a book of metaphysics, its language in general belongs rather to the sphere of manifestation than to that of essential being. This fact affords a plausible ground

for those who contend that the term Son gives no real information on the essential interrelations of the Divine Persons. They are able to say that the Logos appeared in a human nature begotten according to the will of God, a nature penetrated with a filial sense, and serving to present to men the most perfect model in respect of sonship; that in consequence of this preëminent illustration of sonship the name of Son, even if in strictness it is appropriate only to the human aspect of the Redeemer, is very naturally used in referring to His person generally. As He is properly termed "Christ" in consideration of the preëminence of the vocation — the spiritual kingship — to which He was appointed, so He is properly termed "Son" in consideration of His unique sense and illustration of sonship.

It cannot be denied that much of the New Testament reference to the Son may be very well explained in this way. The human consciousness of Christ was so large a factor in His speech that many of His own declarations respecting His filial relation to God may be thus accounted for, that is, as being determined by the perfect sense of sonship which belonged to His human consciousness.

Nevertheless, New Testament data as a whole must be regarded as countenancing the conclusion that the name of Son, from the standpoint of revelation, is indicative of the preincarnate relation of Christ, or His relation on the divine side. The author of the Epistle to the Hebrews intimates that he thus conceived the subject in representing that the Son by whom God made the worlds is "the effulgence of His glory and the very image of His substance." Paul shows that he had the same view in mind by the almost equivalent terms in which he describes the Son in the Epistle to the Colossians.[1] A token of the same conception is found in the term "only-begotten" which John in several instances applies to

[1] Col. i. 12–17. See also Gal. iv. 4.

Christ.[1] Meyer expresses the natural implication of the term when he says: "*μονογενής* designates the Logos as the *only* Son, besides whom the Father has none, who did not like the *τέκνα θεοῦ* (John i. 12, 13) become such by moral generation, nor by adoption, but by the intrinsic relation inhering in the divine essence, whereby He was *in the beginning* with God, being Himself divine in nature and person."[2]

If by the "procession" of the Spirit is understood the eternal and necessary mode of His subsistence in the Godhead, it must be said that the Scriptures make no direct statement on the subject. It is true that in the Gospel of John the Spirit is described as proceeding from the Father,[3] and in First Corinthians[4] as being from God, *ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ*. But in either case it is forcing the language out of its more obvious intent to take it metaphysically, rather than economically, or to suppose that it denotes anything else than the relation of the Spirit's working to the will or agency of the Father. In the sense of the evangelist the statement that the Spirit proceeds from the Father is simply another way of saying that it belongs to the prerogative and standing purpose of the Father to give or to pour out the Spirit.[5] Accordingly, the sole scriptural

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[1] John i. 14, 18, iii. 16, 18; 1 John iv. 9.

[2] Comment on John i. 14.

[3] John xv. 26.

[4] 1 Cor. ii. 12.

[5] A staunch Trinitarian finds in the form of statement used an argument for this interpretation. The employment of the preposition *παρά* rather than *ἐκ*, says Westcott, is indicative of the idea of proceeding on a mission as distinguished from that of derivation from a source. The same preposition is habitually used in connection with the coming forth of the Son to fulfill His mission. "The use of *παρά* in this place seems therefore to show decisively that the reference here is to the temporal mission of the Holy Spirit, and not to the eternal procession. In accordance with this usage the phrase in the creeds is uniformly 'which proceedeth out of' (*τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον τὸ ἐκ τοῦ πατρὸς ἐκπορευόμενον*); and it is most worthy of notice that the fathers who apply this passage to the eternal procession instinctively substitute *ἐκ* for *παρά*." (The Gospel according to St. John, pp. 224–225.) It may properly be added, that without a special context even the use of *ἐκ*, to indicate the relation of the Spirit, would be no adequate proof of a design to teach an eternal metaphysical derivation, as opposed to a being sent forth into a sphere of action.

ground for the Catholic doctrine of procession is found in the general representation of the subordination of the Spirit to the Father and the Son. A certain demand of congruity is met by supposing that the economic subordination reflects a species of dependence in the mode of personal subsistence. Since the economic dependence is predicated of the Spirit in His relation to the Son, as well as to the Father,[1] there is much the same scriptural ground for believing in the procession from the Son, as in that from the Father.[2]

The trinitarian process in the Godhead, whatever subordination of Son and Spirit it may involve, does not compromise their eternity or the absolute necessity of their being. The process itself is to be conceived as eternal and necessary. While the Father is the first in the order of thought, and in some way is the ground of the personal subsistence of the Son and the Spirit, He cannot be without the Son and the Spirit any more than they can be without Him. The logical priority of one Person does not prevent the co-equality of the three as regards necessary subsistence.

In ascribing to the Son and the Spirit eternity, necessary subsistence, and other attributes, or elements of rank, which distinctly transcend the creaturely plane, we exhaust the scriptural warrant as respects their nature and dignity. The Bible does not assert their strict equality with the Father. On the contrary, in its general representation, a certain pre-eminence is assigned to the Father; indeed, this preëminence appears in the midst of some of the most emphatic tributes to the Son and the Spirit.[3] In dealing with this fact, the theologian is likely to give the preference to one of two contrasted

[1] John xv. 26, xvi. 7.

[2] At a comparatively early date the Greek Church became the champion of the doctrine of a single procession, while the Latin Church advocated the theory of a procession from both Father and Son. The act of the latter in asserting its faith by adding the *filioque* clause to the Constantinopolitan creed was sharply censured by the Greek theologians.

[3] Heb. i.; Col. i.; Phil. ii. 6–11; Eph. iv. 4–6; John v. 19–26, xiv. 26, xv. 26.

points of view. On the one hand, abiding in the letter of the Scriptures, and allowing his thought to be dominated by the general picture which they give, he may place, like the early Arminians in Holland, considerable stress upon the subordination of the Son and the Spirit. On the other hand, conceiving that it best suits the demand of consistent thinking to present Divine Persons as nearly as possible on the same plane, he may conclude that the aspect of subordination which attaches to the Son and the Spirit in the Scriptures is largely due to the economic standpoint from which they are described, and may, therefore, be much reduced in a metaphysical view. Something may be said for either alternative. In our opinion a guarded allowance of subordination is better justified than a dogmatic assertion of equality. This position has the advantage of conformity to the apparent tenor of revelation which indubitably favors the conclusion that, while the Son and the Spirit are necessary to the Father, He is yet the prius of their personal subsistence in a sense other than that in which they condition His. Then, too, a certain subordination of Son and Spirit, so long as that degree of perfection is assigned to them which effectually excludes the possibility of disharmony, is congenial to the thought of the divine unity, as enforcing an emphatic association of all in the Godhead with a single ground or source.

IV. — Relation of Philosophy to the Trinitarian Theory.

If not deducible on simple grounds of reason, the doctrine of the Trinity is at least not contradictory to rational thinking. The pert objector who alleges against it the law of mathematics only needs to be told that no sane advocate of the doctrine ever dreams that God is one and three in the same respect. His contention is, rather, that an adequate con-

ception of God must take account of trinitarian distinctions, though in language which is not formally scientific the name of God may be applied to any one of the Persons as a possessor of divine predicates.

An objection, which may be urged with a better show of justice, charges the trinitarian view with being less conformable than the opposing theory to the philosophical demand for unity at the basis of the universe. By way of response to this two things are to be said. In the first place, the trinitarian view is counter to an abstract rather than to a real unity. The supposition of three Persons conjoined indissolubly in the necessary mode of their subsistence, and abiding eternally in a harmony as absolute as their intellectual and ethical perfection, involves no such division or contrariety in the ground of the universe as needs to afflict the philosopher in his demand for unity. In the second place, philosophy is under obligation to postulate suitable conditions for the divine life as well as to search for unity. In meeting the former interest an advantage is afforded by the thought of personal distinctions in the Godhead. As love holds a foremost place in ethical values, it must be regarded as central to the life of God. But love demands fellowship, and perfect fellowship subsists only between persons who are essentially on the same plane. The infinite outflow of divine affection gets at once its suitable object and its suitable response only as there is a plurality of Divine Persons. Creatures in their imperfection and limitation make an inadequate object. In spite of them a unipersonal God must remain forever in comparative solitude.[1]

[1] The objection that love between the Persons of the Trinity, as being within the Godhead, is only a self-love, cannot be regarded as well taken. If the Son is in any true sense a substantial image of the Father, and relations of mutual contemplation and of fellowship subsist between them — as Scripture and catholic teaching imply — then a love has place which is something else than mere self-love. With more plausibility an objection may be urged from the analogy of the divine omnipotence. As this does not go forth, it may be said, into an infinite effect, so the infinite love of God need not have a corresponding object. In an ethical

A secondary advantage from this point of view is the safeguard which it supplies against a pantheistic minifying of the distinction between God and the world. To suppose such a self-communication within the Godhead as satisfies infinite love puts us in a favorable position to think of creation as a free act of God rather than a necessary evolution from Him.[1] The former view is stanchly theistic; the latter is congenial to the pantheistic conception, though in fairness it must be said that the total theory of some of its representatives by no means deserves to be described as pantheism.

This expresses, as we conceive, the most that philosophy has to offer in behalf of a plurality of Divine Persons. We say plurality rather than trinity; for the interior demand of the divine life is not so clearly for a trinity as for a duality of Persons. It may indeed be urged that fellowship has the most perfect conditions where three are so conjoined that each knows that in the loving contemplation of another he has the unqualified sympathy of a third. Still it cannot be claimed that a third is necessary to real fellowship; and all attempts which have been made to construe such necessity in relation to the Persons of the Trinity must be pronounced strained and artificial. The trinal as distinguished from the dual representation of divine personality, though not at all opposed by philosophy, cannot be regarded as very distinctly demanded by the same. Doubtless in the creaturely sphere there is much to suggest the conclusion that trinality is characteristic of the more complete being and the more perfect process. On the ground of analogy, therefore, a general motive is supplied for imputing trinality to God. It has to be confessed, however, that the analogies of the creaturely sphere do not definitely imply just that kind of trinality which is supposed

being, however, the exercise of mere power is secondary, subordinate to ethical dictates. The demand for it, therefore, cannot be placed on a full parity with the demand for the exercise and satisfaction of love.

[1] Compare Aquinas, Sum. Theol., I. 33. 1.

by the catholic theory of the Godhead. After all attempts to illustrate, we are left with the conclusion that the Divine Trinity is *sui generis*. Among illustrations that have been adduced, the one of greatest historical significance is that which Augustine regarded as supplied by *memoria*, *intellectus*, and *voluntas* — memory, understanding, and will, as they exist in man. Memory, as he conceived, is a condition of self-knowledge; the divine mind in knowing itself in a manner objectifies itself, or begets an offspring corresponding to itself, that is, the Son; and the loving will which embraces this offspring and unites Him to the begetter answers to the Holy Spirit. Augustine himself confessed that the analogy could be taken only in a qualified sense.[1]

Going beyond the thought of Augustine, various writers have argued that a trinitarian process is an indispensable assumption in accounting for the divine self-consciousness. This can arise, it is contended, only by the existence of such positive relations as are constituted by the Father's objectifying Himself in the Son, and returning to Himself in the Spirit. More, however, can be said in favor of the possibility for this being the mode of the divine consciousness than in behalf of its necessity. One needs to be possessed of transcendent insight before claiming authority to deny that God can be revealed to Himself except by a substantial image of Himself, and that subsisting in duplicate form, or as Son and Spirit. Only an indifferent support, therefore, is rendered to the fact of the Trinity by this speculation.

The prominence which the trinitarian conception received in the philosophy of Hegel might appropriately be mentioned, were it not that the Hegelian trinity is quite other than that of the New Testament. In Hegel's scheme Divine Persons proper recede in favor of the stages of a great process; namely, the universal or divine in itself, the divine objectified in the

[1] De Trin. x. 11, xiv. 6; Epist. clxix.; Serm. lii.

world, and the divine coming to self-recognition in finite spirits.[1]

We conclude, then, that the best word which philosophy has to say in behalf of the doctrine of the Trinity comes from a rational view of the demands of love, and from the interest which a pure theism has in maintaining that the universe of creatures is the product of God's free act. The decisive ground for the doctrine is historical rather than speculative.

The conclusion that the Trinity is unique, or without exact counterpart in the sphere of finite reality, involves the inference that the word "Person," as used in trinitarian terminology, is employed with some measure of restriction. The assumption of an eternal dependence of the Son and the Spirit upon the Father and the absolute exclusion of the possibility of contrariety of feeling, will, or purpose on the part of Father, Son, and Spirit enter as limiting notions into the use of the historic term. So long as these limiting notions are firmly grasped, the employment of the word "Person" cannot lead seriously astray; for they safeguard the fundamental unity of the Godhead. In permitting them to rule our contemplation we keep clear of any real tritheistic implication. The thought of God is diversified to us by a warrantable trinitarian representation, but not at the expense of compromising the conception of a unitary ground of the world.

From the foregoing it follows that an intelligible statement

[1] With whatever degree of right, Hegel acknowledged a foreshadowing of his trinitarian conception in Hinduism. Nitzsch is inclined to grant a partial correspondence between the two. He finds, however, very slight occasion to bring the Hindu doctrine of the Trimurti into comparison with the proper Christian teaching, the former being half-polytheistic, half-pantheistic, and cosmological in its type rather than ethical. (Lehrbuch der Evangelischen Dogmatik, 1896, p. 410.) Lehmann sees in the Hindu trinity little else than a convenient combination of divinities that had obtained a wide acknowledgment. "Trimurti," he says, "has never become a dogma or a real theory; it has had neither for faith nor speculation any noteworthy significance. It is simply an expression of the Indian syncretism, of the ambition to unite and blend together different cults." (Lehrbuch der Religionsgeschichte, bearbeitet von Chantepie de la Saussaye, II. 132.)

of the doctrine of the Trinity is essentially comprised in a formula like this: Corresponding to the threefold manifestation of Father, Son, and Spirit, there subsist in the Godhead, in a certain logical order, eternal and necessary distinctions, which enter into the divine consciousness and determine the perfection of the divine life. To affirm less than this is to fail to do justice to the total data of the subject. To assert much more is to resort to unintelligible categories, or to an unintelligible combination of categories.

CHAPTER III.

GOD AS CREATOR AND UPHOLDER OF THE WORLD, AND HIS PROVIDENCE THEREIN.

I. — Creation Considered from the Standpoint of Revelation.

The Bible deals with the theme of creation in the spirit of pious contemplation. The manifest aim of the Old Testament references to the subject is to attest the greatness and unqualified supremacy of Jehovah, and thereby to incite Israel to unshaken trust and devotion. In the New Testament this aim is supplemented by the wish of the apostolic writers to show the relation of the Son of God at once to the Father and to the world. In either Testament the religious interest is completely dominant. Out of several scores of passages,[1] there is not one which suggests that it was dictated by a purely historic, scientific, or philosophic interest. The first chapter of Genesis, it is true, gives more details than were required to present God as the creator of all things, and to set forth man's relation to Him. These ends could have been effected without portioning off events by a scheme of days. Still such

[1] Gen. i. 1, ii. 3, ii. 4–23; Ex. xx. 11; Neh. ix. 6; Job ix. 9, x. 8–11, xxvi. 7–14, xxviii. 23–27, xxxiii. 4, xxxvii. 18, xxxviii. 4 to xxxix. 30; Ps. viii., xix. 1–6, xxiv. 1, 2, xxxiii. 6–9, xc. 2, xcv. 5, cii. 25, civ. 2–6, cxxi. 2, cxxxv. 6, cxxxvi. 5–9, cxlvi. 6, cxlviii. 5, 6; Prov. iii. 19, viii., xxx. 4; Isa. xxxvii. 16, xl. 12, 22, 26, 28, xlii. 5, xliv. 24, xlv. 9, 12, 18, xlviii. 13, li. 13, lxiv. 8, lxvi. 1, 2; Jer. x. 12, xxvii. 5, xxxi. 35, xxxii. 17, li. 15, 19; Amos iv. 13, v. 8, ix. 6; Jonah i. 9; Zech. xii. 1; John i. 3, 10; Acts iv. 24; Rom. i. 20; Eph. iii. 9; Col. i. 16; Heb. i. 2, ii. 10, iii. 4, xi. 3; 2 Pet. iii. 5; Rev. iv. 11, xiv. 7.

a scheme obviously served a religious purpose, since it added the sanctity of a high religious association to the Jewish arrangement of the week. Supposing the writer, either by his own reflection or by tradition based on the reflection of some more primitive sage, or by special divine illumination, to have gained the conviction that creation was consummated through successive stages and reached its climax in the sixth stage, he needed no other interest than that of religion to incite him to fill out his theme substantially in the form in which it is presented.

These facts have a significance that ought not to be discarded. Finding that forty-nine out of fifty references to creation were obviously rather the offspring of a religious interest than of scientific ambition, and that in the fiftieth the same interest is sufficiently discernible, we may properly be cautious about importing more of science into this particular account than belongs to it. In other words, the general method of the Bible, in dealing with the subject of creation, does not favor the expectation that the claims of physical science will be found to have been minutely satisfied in the first chapter of Genesis. Conceptions of nature being used elsewhere in the Scriptures as mere scaffolding for the erection of the edifice of religious truth, it is antecedently probable that they are so used here.

In the view of biblical exegetes this antecedent probability is becoming more and more a matter of certainty. While the superiority of the narrative in Genesis to the ethnic accounts, and its general agreement with science as respects the order of mundane conditions and the progress of life, may be alleged in behalf of its scientific character, there are still grave difficulties in the way of sustaining for it a proper scientific character. No one of the theories which have been proposed can be regarded as a real solvent of these difficulties. Take the restitution hypothesis, which interposes the geologic ages between the first and second verses of the first chapter in Gene-

sis, and makes the narrative which begins with the third verse not so much an account of the primal creation as of a restitution of order and life after a period of disruption. In the first place, this hypothesis has the disadvantage of appearing utterly foreign to the thought of the writer. He says nothing about a great catastrophe. He refers to the waste and void condition of the earth in precisely the terms which naturally he would have used if he were attempting to describe the state of the earth at its first origination. He speaks of the creation of light as if thereby a new factor was introduced, and not one which had already supplied a necessary condition to the life of plants and animals through untold centuries. In like manner each stage is recorded as if the original drama of creation was being presented. In the second place, the restitution hypothesis is contradicted by the fact that the heavenly bodies are not introduced till after the earth has been fitted up and clothed with plant life. This shows plainly that, in the thought of the writer, the first verse in his narrative was either used as a preamble, a statement of the general subject of which the details were to be given in order, or that it was meant to describe simply the creation of the materials of heaven and earth. If he had considered himself as having said that the heavenly bodies were made before the dawn of the *first* day, he could not have felt called upon to assign the divine act of making them to the *fourth* day. To harmonize this assignment with the restitution hypothesis, one must suppose that the writer held the notion that the heavens, as well as the earth, had been broken up in some mighty catastrophe, and so needed to be reconstituted. But he makes no reference to a catastrophe of this sort, and it is needless to say that no scientific authority will grant that the heavens were still in chaos when the earth had been brought to order and fruitfulness. If it be said that the account of the fourth day was meant to be descriptive, not of the *making*, but only of the *appearing* of the heavenly bodies, or the disclosure of

their light by a removal of the intervening mists, it must be answered that such an interpretation is borrowed entirely from the conceived demands of science, and not at all from the facts of biblical language. That language, with its specification of the purpose which the heavenly bodies were to serve, implies that they were fashioned at that point of the creative process where they are mentioned — a view quite consonant with the geocentric scheme of the writer, which made the heavenly bodies mere adjuncts to the earth. In the third place, the restitution hypothesis offers no practical advantage in the way of reconciling science and revelation. If it assumes that after the chaotic irruption the earth was fitted up and replenished in six literal days, it affronts the conviction of the whole body of scientists respecting the law of continuity or gradual process in nature. On the same view, also, the theologian may well be puzzled to explain how the Creator should have chosen to be so lavish of time in the primitive creation, or the original preparation of the forms of life, and so sparing in the work of restitution, unless it is worthy of belief that He had occasion to experiment with opposite methods. If, on the other hand, the scheme of ordinary days is not insisted upon, the restitution hypothesis effects nothing towards harmonizing the letter of the Bible with the demands of science.

Taking the less violent and more current theory, that the passage in Genesis was meant to be an account of the primitive creation, but that the days stand for periods of indefinite length, we still find obstacles in the way of ascribing a scientific character to the narrative. Thus the firmament appears to have been regarded as a solid expanse, above which a part of the primitive mass of waters was stored.[1] Again, it is not

[1] With Gen. i. 6-8 compare Job xxxvii. 18; Prov. viii. 27; 2 Kings vii. 2; Ps. cxlviii. 4. The same notion is discoverable in the Babylonian account. The world-fashioner, Marduk, is there represented as cutting the slain monster Tiâmat into two halves. "'The one half he fashioned as a covering for the heavens,

accordant with scientific inference to suppose that the whole cycle of plant life was completed before that of animal life began, and still less that a special cycle was interposed between them. These are difficulties which confront us even if it be admitted that a sound exegesis allows the word "days" to be taken in the sense of long periods or ages. But it is very doubtful whether it is exegetically permissible to suppose that the writer had any thought of long periods. The fact may be alleged, it is true, that there were, according to his representation, no visible sun and stars to measure by their revolutions the length of the first three days. But evidently in his thought the day was constituted by an alternation of light and darkness, and there is nothing to show that he did not think of this alternation as taking place in the ordinary intervals. In antique thought the light was regarded as a luminous substance, having indeed a prominent source in the heavenly bodies, but not wholly emanating from them.[1] It is rather probable than otherwise that this was the thought of the sacred writer, and that, accordingly, he regarded the motions of the heavenly bodies as only more distinctly marking off the coming and recession of the light which had place before the proper rulers of day and night — the sun, moon, and stars — had appeared. It may not be easy to show positively that the writer thought only of ordinary days. But, inasmuch as he gives no hint to the contrary, and in the immediate connection, where he refers to the hallowing of the seventh day, evidently uses the word "day" in its ordinary acceptation, it must

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attaching a bolt and placing there a guardian, with orders not to permit the waters to come out.' It is evident that the canopy of heaven is meant. Such is the enormous size of Tiâmat that one-half of her body, flattened out so as to serve as a curtain, is stretched across the heavens to keep the 'upper waters' — 'the waters above the firmament' as the Book of Genesis puts it — from coming down. To secure the execution of this design a bolt is drawn in front of the canopy and a guardian placed there, like at a city wall, to prevent anyone or anything from coming out." (Morris Jastrow, The Religion of Babylonia and Assyria, p. 428.)

[1] See Job xxxviii. 19, 20.

be pronounced a venturesome and ill-supported assumption which claims that he had in mind periods or ages. Indeed, but for the association of the subject with the Jewish week, shorter intervals than ordinary days would have been more agreeable to his way of thinking than longer intervals. As appears very strikingly in the description of the first day's work, God had but to speak, and it was done. Suppose now the writer conceived that this day stood for an indefinite period; in that event it must have appeared to him that God had a long rest, an immense Sabbath, before undertaking the second day's work, instead of first reaching a Sabbath at the end of six days. His notion of the method of almighty power is congruous with that of the seventh-day rest only on the supposition of moderate intervals between the creative acts.

But perhaps it will be said that the author's understanding of his sketch of creation is not the full measure of its significance, his language being divinely intended to symbolize more truth than he had grasped. An assumption of this kind underlies the vision hypothesis, according to which the theme of creation was unfolded to the sacred writer in a series of pictures, which, indeed, shadowed forth the general outlines of the subject, but were not meant, as respects accurate knowledge, to anticipate the researches of natural science. This view seems, at first thought, to agree very well with the cast of the creation narrative. But there are several queries in connection with it which need to be answered. If the subject matter was given to the writer in the form of visions, and was in no part supplied by tradition or his own thinking, why were not the visions so shaped as to be in more distinct agreement with the conclusions of natural science, for example, on the function of the firmament and the relation of the heavenly bodies to the earth in point of time? Again, if the Divine Spirit furnished outright such views of nature as are contained in the first chapter of Genesis, why did not the same Spirit so dominate all subsequent references to the subject as to

secure an appearance of entire agreement with that chapter? How happens it that in the narrative in the second chapter in Genesis — which the later school of exegetes assigns to a different hand from that which penned the first chapter — the creation of plants and animals is apparently represented as subsequent to that of man? How happens it that in the Book of Job the stars are represented as already on hand when the foundations of the earth were laid (xxxviii. 4-7)? A due weighing of these points can hardly fail to suggest that considerable scope must be given to a purely human element in any theory which is to run clear of arbitrariness and artificiality.

On the whole, the most eligible conclusion is that the framework of conceptions respecting nature in the creation narrative was not a product of direct revelation, but rather of human thinking purified and ennobled to some extent by the reaction of the high religious standpoint supplied by revealed truth. At least, the agency of the Divine Spirit, as relates to the genesis of this order of conceptions, cannot be assumed to have been fully controlling. The divine element in the narrative is preëminently its lofty theism, its pure and noble conception of God and of man's relation to Him. A conception so high, so well-guarded, and expressed in terms of such simple majesty, was worthy of its birthplace within the sphere of revelation. It could not have been found outside of this sphere in that age, and is on a level with the best thought of any age. As Dillmann remarks, it is the higher religious faith with which the biblical narrative is informed that gives it its stamp of superiority. "Because the proper sharp distinction is made between God and the world, and God is thought in His full sublimity, spirituality, and goodness, the representation of the course of creation is here sublimer, worthier and more correct than anywhere else [in ancient story], free from admixture of the grotesque and the fantastic, simple, sober, clear and true."[1]

[1] Die Genesis, p. 9. In Eng. Edit. I. 42, 43.

The Bible contains no formal definition of creation, and consequently no express declaration that all finite things were made *ex nihilo*. This truth, however, is implied in the absolute supremacy which is ascribed to God throughout the whole range of the Scriptures. Moreover, certain individual passages that treat of creation may be regarded as almost asserting the *ex nihilo* doctrine. This holds of the first verse of Genesis, unless that verse is to be regarded as simply a statement of the general subject to be treated; for, in that event a contrast would be presented in the narrative between creating and specific fashioning, which would imply for the former the sense of producing from nothing. In our opinion the verse in question is simply a statement of the subject to be unfolded. Accordingly we find a clearer indication of belief in creation *ex nihilo* in Col. i. 17, where the Son of God is declared to be *before all things;* and in Heb. xi. 3, where it is said, "By faith we understand that the worlds have been framed by the word of God, so that what is seen hath not been made out of things which do appear." One can indeed deny that either of these passages indubitably excludes a formless invisible matter, existing from eternity; but when we join with these sentences the notion of God's absolute supremacy, as characteristic of Jewish thinking, it is only warrantable to regard them as meant to teach creation in the most unqualified sense.

In this point of view the biblical system stands in enviable contrast with the general trend of pagan thinking. Placing free personality at the head, starting with Spirit, as opposed to a primitive chaos, it has no occasion to assume a blind nature-power, or fate, over against the will of God; and can represent Divine Providence as conducting the world-process toward the goal of its own choice, instead of working within a predetermined cycle, where it can indeed modify the relation of individual things, but is powerless to control the general outcome. Manifestly the primacy of spirit over nature, charac-

teristic of the biblical standpoint, is an item of far-reaching consequence.

The motive of creation, like that of all divine acts, is to be sought in the moral nature of God, which has already been defined as *holy love*. To such a nature a kingdom founded on the principles of righteousness and love, and thus at once manifesting the highest excellence and sharing the deepest blessedness, must appear supremely worthy, the foremost end for which even a divine will can be engaged. God, then, created in order that there might be a kingdom which should reflect His holy love and find therein its everlasting beatification. It was necessary for Him to create only as it is necessary for a generous spirit to do generous deeds. No act could be more free which is equally conformable to rational ends. It is wrongly characterized when it is described as compelled, or even necessary, and is best defined as a free act supremely agreeable to God's ethical nature. All things were created for His pleasure (Rev. iv. 11.); but from His very nature as holy love His pleasure is most perfectly fulfilled in bringing many sons unto glory, that is, to the likeness of His holiness love, and blessedness (Heb. ii. 10; 1 John iii. 1, 2).

II. — Creation from the Standpoint of Science.

As the Bible, in its proper function, cannot foreclose the way to science, so natural science cannot properly interfere with the work of revelation or of philosophy. Its subject-matter is the phenomenal world, the sphere of perceived or inferred changes — those in the past which have left some record as well as those which are still open to observation. It can take note of the apparent connection between one change and another, and as a result of continuous observation and comparison can make inferences more or less trustworthy on the order of changes, or the so-called laws of nature. But

natural science as such does not get out of or beyond the series of natural changes. Its sphere is that of mutations, and not of origins proper or ends proper. The moment that the natural scientist begins to dogmatize about primal causes or ultimate ends, he has stepped out of his own domain into that of religion or philosophy.

This point of view determines the bearing of the doctrine of evolution, regarded as a scientific theory, upon the subject before us. In its proper scientific sense the doctrine of evolution does not at all preclude a theistic conception of creation. It simply affirms within nature a process which culminates in the highest forms of organic life, and leaves us perfectly free to reason respecting the agent back of the process. This has been acknowledged by the most prominent advocates of evolution. Thus Romanes tells us that the modern scientific doctrine has done nothing toward determining the nature of the government, whether personal or impersonal, which is over the world of life and mind. "This is a question," he says, "which cannot be affected by any advance of science, further than science has proved herself able to dispose of erroneous arguments based upon ignorance of nature. For while the sphere of science is necessarily restricted to that of natural causation which it is her office to explore, the question touching the *nature of this natural causation* is one which necessarily lies without the whole sphere of such causation itself: therefore, it lies beyond any possible intrusion by science."[1] Le Conte remarks, "What science, and especially evolution, destroys, is not the idea of design, but only our low anthropomorphic notions of the mode of working of the Designer."[2] He contends also that the theory of evolution in no wise militates against a spiritual philosophy; and finds no obstacle to this conclusion in the fact that some eminent scientists are

[1] Darwin and after Darwin, pp. 413, 414.

[2] Evolution, its Nature and Evidences, and its Relation to Religious Thought, p. 346.

patrons of materialism. "In a question of science, viz., the law of evolution, their authority is deservedly high, but in a question of philosophy, viz., materialism, it is far otherwise. If the pure scientists smile when theological philosophers, unacquainted with the methods of science, undertake to dogmatize on the question of evolution, they must pardon the philosophers if they also smile when the pure scientists imagine that they can at once solve questions in philosophy which have agitated the human mind from the earliest times." [1]

As evolution does not determine the view which is to be held respecting the agent concerned in the initiation and progress of the world-order or of organic life, so it does not determine the conception which is to be held of the end of creation, or that part of the end which finds expression in the dignity and destiny of man; at least, it has no prerogative to contradict at this point the verdict of religious philosophy. Genetic connection of one species of animals with another, and of man with the highest in the list preceding him, does not prove anything disparaging either to his dignity or his destiny. Whatever may have been their discoverable antecedents, the powers and capacities of men are real facts, and are rationally considered prophetic of a destiny of corresponding character. Antecedents are significant only of the order in which the creative or fashioning power proceeded. As Professor Bowne remarks: "When the higher forms are produced they are what they are, and are not to be confounded with their antecedents. We may indeed class them together for logical convenience, and may speak of later forms as modifications of earlier ones; but both the identification and the modification are purely subjective, and have no significance for the real things. Apart from our subjective manipulation, the fact is the individuals and the power which produces individuals through the processes of generation, in such a way that they

[1] Page 287.

admit of being classified according to an ascending scale."[1] Applying this truth to the supposed connection between human and animal minds, he says: "To identify them because they are all minds would be like identifying a watch and a locomotive because they are both machines, or lead and gold because they are both metals. To identify them because the term mind is one, is to overlook the fact that the thing is many, and that no classification removes the incommunicable difference of individuality. . . . If it is no reflection upon the nature of mind that it was once in the embryonic state of infancy and the whimsical state of childhood, so also it is no reflection upon it that it was preceded by others whose development never went beyond the animal stage."

Approximately equivalent language might be cited from scientists who are known as steadfast advocates of evolutionary faith. Thus Le Conte says respecting the chief points in which animals show a psychical kinship with men: "In every one of these the resemblance is great, but the difference is immense, and not only in degree but also in kind. In every case it is like shadow and substance, promise and fulfillment, or, still better, it is like embryo and child. The change from one to the other is like to a birth into a higher sphere, the beginning of another cycle of evolution."[2] "Assuredly," claims Lankester, "it cannot lower our conception of man's dignity if we have to regard him as 'the flower of all the ages,' bursting from the great stream of life which has flowed on through countless epochs with one increasing purpose, rather than as an isolated, miraculous being, put together abnormally from elemental clay."[3] The same writer speaks somewhat tolerantly of the supposition that in the production of man's spiritual nature a direct agency of the Creator is to be assumed; and another zealous advocate of evolution,

[1] Methodist Review, November, 1893.

[2] Evolution etc., p. 324.

[3] The Advancement of Science, Occasional Essays and Addresses, 1890, p. 52.

A. R. Wallace, goes further, declaring positively for the theory of special influx from a spiritual domain.[1] But these are items of minor significance in this connection. The fact of principal moment is, that nothing which evolutionary science has discovered respecting the antecedents of man stands in the way of a high conception of his nature and destiny.

Some of the principal considerations urged in behalf of the fact of evolution in organic nature are the following: (1) The analogy of inorganic nature, or the advance of the world to a habitable condition by slow stages through an immense period of time. (2) The simplicity of archaic types as compared with later forms. (3) The resemblances which may be traced, stage by stage, through the whole line of organic forms, or, at least, through a large part of it. (4) The similarity of the embryonic phases of higher forms to the mature phases of lower forms — a fact which suggests inheritance modified by accelerated and heightened development. (5) The existence in the more complex animals of functionless or rudimentary structures, these structures being indicative of changes of organism resulting from changed conditions, and thus testifying to the plastic character of organic nature. (6) Geographical and chronological distribution according to a particular plan, or the correlation in space and time of any one type with those most nearly allied to it, together with the fact that isolated regions commonly exhibit organic forms quite as special as the conditions of the regions. (7) The proved efficiency of artificial selection, or breeding, to produce varieties, what has been effected in this line suggesting that nature, with her vaster periods and subtler arts, can work out immeasurable transformations.

The chief factors in evolution as recognized by naturalists are (1) physical environment, (2) increased use or disuse of organs enforced or permitted by the environment, (3) natural selection, or the survival of the fittest amid the struggle for

[1] Darwinism, 1889, pp. 474–476.

existence, (4) sexual selection, or the advantage of the stronger and more attractive as respects mating. Ultra Darwinians place the main stress upon the third factor; but some of the more recent experts, as well as Lamarck and the older naturalists, have contended that a large place must be given to the first two factors. In their view characters acquired by use, as well as peculiarities coming by birth, must be regarded as capable of transmission.[1]

In opposition to evolution there may be alleged, (1) The confessed absence of any proof of spontaneous generation. "At the present moment," says Huxley, "there is not a shadow of trustworthy direct evidence that abiogenesis does take place, or has taken place, within the historic period during which existence on the globe is recorded."[2] This fact, to be sure, does not directly antagonize evolution, since a very pronounced evolutionist may announce, as did Darwin, that his doctrine does not touch the origin of life, being concerned simply with its development. Still, the absence of any proof of spontaneous generation gives a certain standing-room to the idea of special creation. If there was a direct use of divine power to initiate life, progress in nature by the instrumentality of the miracle seems not to be wholly alien to the Creator's plan. An instrumentality that was employed once may conceivably have been employed more than once. (2) The absence of any trace of such a mass of intermediate or transitional forms as must have existed on the supposition of the slow mutation of types. The imperfection of the geological record may be cited in explanation of the deficit; yet it must be granted that a consideration of the missing links is not helpful to a scientific confidence. (3) The fact that the indi-

[1] So Eimer, Cope, Romanes (within limits), and others against Weismann.

[2] Encyc. Brit. 9th edit., Art. Biology. "The study of the cell," says E. B. Wilson, "has on the whole seemed to widen rather than to narrow the enormous gap that separates even the lowest forms of life from the inorganic world." (The Cell in Development and Inheritance, p. 330.)

viduals of such varieties as have been produced by artificial selection are not in the least degree infertile with the individuals of the parent stock. Let all the kinds of dogs in existence be turned loose upon a limited area, and it would not be long before their wide distinctions would be obliterated by intercrossing. How then does nature manage to prevent the swamping effects of intercrossing so as to secure the evolution of diverging types? This question is not easily answered; and naturalists confess as much when they resort to unexplained tendencies, and assume that a kind of fatality operates to change the reproductive organs in the interest of the infertility of new varieties with the parent stock.[1] (4) The difficulty of so marshalling the facts, that one necessary phase of evolution doctrine shall not be sustained at the expense of another. For example, one phase requires much stress to be placed upon the plasticity of organic life. This is necessary to account for the enormous transformation which is assumed to have taken place. But, on the other hand, it has to be asked: If organic life is so plastic, why have such inconsiderable changes occurred under the operation of natural laws within the period of human observation? Why does that period afford no sign of a natural advance of animals toward the plane of man or toward any higher type? If it be said that the weight of heredity now holds them back, the question arises whether that weight could have been appreciably less at various points in the evolutionary process. Untold centuries were back of the species that are reckoned as the nearest antecedents to man. It may be supposed, indeed, that the species from which the human branch emerged was comparatively new at the time of the emergence; but to assume that in every instance an incipient or newly-formed species was the starting-point for another new species implies such a rapidity in the succession of species, and in the progress of the conditions

[1] Romanes as referred to by Le Conte, Evolution and its Relation to Religious Thought, pp. 76–79.

upon which that succession may be accounted dependent, as is not fully agreeable to evolutionary science. There seems in fact to be a contrariety of interest as respects the time element. It suits one demand of evolution doctrine to suppose modifications of organisms to take place with exceeding slowness. When the limited achievements of artificial selection are under review, it is convenient to refer to the immense æons through which nature has wrought out and fixed the various products of her workmanship. On the other hand, when the attention is directed to the absence of intermediate forms in the geological record, it is convenient to assume crises, jumps in nature, or seasons of rapid evolution. Logically the intervention of such seasons of rapid development of permanent varieties, or species, may be conceivable. But if the stimulus of special natural conditions can effect this, the question why the stimulus of artificial conditions cannot do more in the production of permanent forms needs to be well answered.

Objections of this kind may not suffice to undermine faith in the fact of evolution. Certainly the confidence of naturalists has not yet shown any token of wavering. While perhaps they are not quite so sure as formerly respecting the method of evolution, they have revealed no disposition to surrender the fact. But this much at least must be conceded to the objections: they hint that no complete insight into the subject of organic nature has yet been reached, and that the scientist may well ornament his discourse with something of that modesty which he is apt to regard as entirely normal in the theologian. The lack of the grace is the less excusable in view of the very excellent examples of it which have been afforded by eminent scientists.

Evolution in phenomenal world stands but not in Philosophy (Bowne & Curtis)

III. — Creation from the Standpoint of Philosophy.

The verdict enforced by the tenor of revelation, that the world was created *ex nihilo,* rather than formed from an eternally existing stuff, is entirely agreeable to philosophy. As was observed in connection with the cosmological argument for the existence of God, this conclusion is most conformable to the demand of the human mind for unity, and is commended by the law of parsimony. Obviously also it is the most eligible conclusion from the standpoint of devotion or worship. The conception of a world-creator is higher than that of a world-fashioner. Moreover, as has been argued, there seems to be no guarantee of a perfect world-fashioner unless the same can be viewed as likewise the creator of his materials. Anything present to him without his will might conceivably be imperfectly subject to his working.

It may be thought that a substitute for creation *ex nihilo* can be found, without sacrificing the absolute supremacy of God, if recourse is made to the doctrine of emanations, and it is assumed that things are made from God's own nature, substance, or power. But this view is incompatible with any true and exact thought of God. He is no divisible mass; like every real agent He is an indivisible unity.

But is the notion of creation *ex nihilo* properly conceivable? Some have answered in the negative. Sir William Hamilton, for example, contended that the human mind cannot conceive the sum total of existence as being either increased or diminished, and consequently can understand by creation only the existing subsequently in act of what existed previously in power, as by annihilation it understands the subsequent existence in power of what previously existed in act. Now it is to be conceded that imagination cannot picture the *process* of creation; and also that thought cannot construe that process. But the *fact* of creation, or the addition of the existence of the world to the existence of God without any diminution of

His being, can be admitted in thought, even as we admit in thought the fact of a power of positive initiation, pertaining to our volitional nature, without ever gaining insight into the process. To refuse to admit this much is to shut out the proper conception of creation. What philosophy has to do, then, is not to construe the process, but to secure valid thoughts both of the agent and of the product of His action, both of God and the creature. Any view which compromises the indivisible unity of God, or gives too much independence to the creature, or assigns to it too little reality, it is the province of philosophy to criticise or reject. Beyond this, as we conceive, its competency does not extend.

A kind of eternal substratum for things has been discovered by some thinkers in the ideas or patterns which exist in the divine mind. The more emphatic realists among the mediæval scholastics were of this way of thinking. Herein they were following in the wake of Plato, who predicated of general notions a real substantiality, and made them the antecedents and substratum of individual things. But the patterns in the divine mind are only the logical presuppositions of things. To make anything else of them than pure conceptions is to go beyond all warrant of analogy and gratuitously to postulate a nondescript entity. Conceptions, or patterns, and resembling individuals made in conformity with the patterns, are all the elements which are needed or warranted in an inventory of finite things. Genera and species have value as subjective classifications, or mental summaries of the resembling features of individuals; but to make them real for the things themselves is giving exaggerated honor to a superfluous and unmanageable figment of the speculative imagination. If it be objected that this view leaves us only isolated individuals, it is to be answered that finite reality is in fact made up of individuals connected solely by capabilities of interaction, which capabilities depend at bottom upon the fundamental unity; in other words, upon God. Aside from the individual beings and

their interconnection in this manner, all finite unities are conceptual or subjective.

The relation of creation to time is a subject which has elicited not a little discussion. In the first place, it is to be interpeted in the light of God's intrinsic timelessness. Since He has a perfect grasp of Himself He is, in the essential mode of His being, above the experience of succession, and so above time. Accordingly, creation, as giving rise to changing being, must be regarded as having initiated time, and the world — that is, a certain sum of finite reality — is as old as time itself. In this sense it may be said that the world has always existed; no time can be thought that is not viewed as co-existent with finite things. This of course is quite different from saying that the world is eternal. The assertion of its originated, dependent, and changing being cancels in respect to it the proper notion of eternity.

It was noticed in the treatment of the divine attributes that, although God in His absolute being is above the category of time, He must be regarded as recognizing His own workmanship in all that pertains to it, the time characteristic included. As time is recognized by Him for all that it is actually, it is entirely conceivable that creation proceeds through temporal intervals, or at least respects an order which from our point of view must appear to be inclusive of temporal intervals. No speculative insight can assure us that divine omnipotence is not still progressing with the work of creation.

IV. — Conservation.

As the references of the Bible to the theme of creation were born of a vivid sense of the might and supremacy of God, so in general were its references to the conservation of creatures. A further use, however, is fulfilled by the latter class of references in that they are made to emphasize the condescending

nearness and compassionate ministry of God to the works of His hands. Both points of view may be discerned in Paul's speech at Athens.[1]

Rationally considered, conservation must be regarded as closely related to creation. Some have been inclined to identify the two. Augustine used language which suggests that conservation may be viewed as a *creatio continua*.[2] But complete identity cannot be admitted. If nothing else stands in the way, there is an insuperable obstacle in the existence of free personalities. A free personality, or a being gifted with self-motion, is, in its very idea, a cause or substance. It has a certain standing of its own, if not by indefeasible right, at least as a matter of fact. It is a second cause, not indeed independent of the great First Cause, but yet not absolutely determined by it in the use of its powers. The positing of this second cause with its capacity for free self-conscious agency is creation. The upholding of it in such a way as not to cancel self-determination is conservation. So far as we view a finite personality under the category of creation, we view it as absolutely determined. When we view it under the category of conservation we must regard the divine agency as allowing a certain scope to the second cause: in other words, we have instead of absolute determination the thought of a divine coöperation or *concursus*. It is possible indeed to speak of an absolute determination to freedom, or of the creating of a being with the sum of his belongings, all free action included. But the terms of such statements are contradictory. The consistent notion is that of creating a being capable of free action and letting him act freely. A being that is only the continuous flow of the energy of will in another being does not answer to the description of an agent or free personality.[3]

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[1] Acts xvii. 25–28. Compare Nehemiah ix. 6; Job xii. 10, xxxiv. 14, 15; Ps. lxv. 9–11, xc. 1, civ. 29, 30, cxlv. 14–16; Matt. vi. 26–30; Col. i. 17; Heb. i. 3.

[2] De Civ. Dei, xii. 25.

[3] On the problem of the creation of beings at once free and dependent, these

When we associate God with a created person we are dealing with two agents, and cannot consistently reduce the second to a mere product. But how is it when we descend to impersonal nature? As there is no occasion to assume here any self-motion, have we any guarantee of substantiality? What reason is there for supposing that impersonal nature is anything more than a constant energizing of the Divine Being, a *creatio continua?* It must be granted that there is no very cogent ground for supposing that it is aught else. If it be claimed that the same Being who gives substantial existence to persons can also posit an impersonal nature which has a proper substantiality, it may be replied that the law of parsimony does not favor the assumption of a substantiality which is not required by any known fact, and which cannot be seen to subserve any purpose. If it be urged that a denial of the substantiality of impersonal nature savors of idealism, and is of sceptical tendency as discrediting the testimony of the senses, it can be answered that a continuous divine energizing, according to a scheme of law, is for us as truly an objective reality as would be a world endowed with a species of independent or substantial existence, and that it is entirely

words of Andrew Seth may well claim our notice: "The speculative reason sees no alternative between absolute dependence, which would make us merely the pipes upon which the divine musician plays, and absolute independence, which would make the world consist of a plurality of self-subsistent real beings. These are the only kinds of relation which it finds intelligible. But it seems to me that it must be, in the nature of the case, impossible for the finite spirit to understand the mode of its relation to the infinite and absolute Spirit in which it lives. That relation could only be intelligible from the absolute point of view. The fact, then, that we cannot reconcile the partial independence and freedom of the finite self with its acknowledged dependence upon God in other respects, need not force us to abandon our primary moral conviction, in deference to a speculative theory, which may be applying a finite plumb-line to measure the resources of the infinite. After all, why should the creation of beings with a real, though partial, freedom and independence be *an absolute impossibility?* It is certainly the only view which makes the world a real place — which makes the whole labor of history more than a shadow flight or aimless phantasmagoria." (Two Lectures on Theism, pp. 47, 48.)

beyond the competency of the senses to determine whether the objective reality has the one character or the other. If the charge of affiliation with pantheism be raised against the view that impersonal nature is only a product of the continuous exercise of God's volitional energy, it can be said that a scheme which assails neither the personality of God nor of man, and, instead of identifying nature with God, views it as the product of His free determination, has nothing of the bane of pantheism.

The question is one which need not greatly disturb the theologian. No practical interest is involved, and the subject does not fall so clearly within the field of rational insight as to make dogmatic assertion appropriate. For persons self-motion and continuous identity must be claimed, and consequently substantiality. Whether mere things have any substantiality, so that in their case there is room for a distinction between creation and conservation, we are not required by any theological exigency to determine.

V. — Providence.

From the doctrine of the constant and necessary dependence of creatures it is manifest that God unceasingly touches the universe at every point. Through the expenditure of a certain efficiency He is in all things, as well as above all things.

From this point of view it appears necessary to affirm a divine providence that is absolutely co-extensive with finite reality. As God has to do with all things, and the perfection of His consciousness and intelligence forbids us to think that He does aught unconsciously, or without good reason, we must conclude, in spite of the difficulty of applying the thought in detail, that He takes notice of everything, and is strictly indifferent to no item of reality. This seems to be

the biblical conception, and it is set forth in specially vivid terms in the teaching of Christ.[1]

Against the theory of an all-inclusive providence two main objections may be alleged. In the first place, many things seem to be intrinsically so insignificant, and to receive actually so little consideration that it is difficult to believe that God makes any account of them whatever. Supposing that some design is served by the general arrangement of seas and continents, what interest can the Almighty have in many of the subordinate groupings of matter? What reason is there for believing that any one of twenty possible collocations would not be just as pleasing to Him as the existing one in a given district? Is it clear that He has any care for the minute forms of life, when they must be crushed right and left by the necessary movements of the larger animals? Can it be seen that He sets any value on the moths whose instincts lead them to rush to their destruction in any flame that entices and bewilders their sight? Can the sustenance of poisonous reptiles be an object with Him, when man's duty to himself and his kind binds him to destroy them at every opportunity? Many like questions can be repeated. At various points it seems as though some things which have gotten into the world-system are accidental or worse. In one and another instance we may perhaps suggest some mitigation of apparent uselessness or harm. But we cannot always do even this much. In general we exhibit the best discretion by acknowledging limited insight and leaning to the view which is commended to us by the worth of the divine ideal to our thought and feeling and by our faith in revelation.

The second objection is the existence of physical evil, or suffering, not to speak, in the present connection, of moral evil. Where a moral subject is concerned, who needs discipline for his moral correction or perfecting, suffering is

[1] Matt. vi. 26–30, x. 29, 30, xii. 36. See also Job xxxviii. to xli.; Ps. civ., cxxxix.

largely explained. If still an enigma in particular instances, its presence is in general accounted for. Indeed, a world in which moral evil should not be accompanied by suffering could not be justified. It would appear in flagrant contradiction to the fitness of things. But how explain the vast quantum of suffering in the animal world, the preying of one species upon another, a carnival of slaughter continued through countless centuries? In dealing with this difficulty, we may be counselled in the first place not to make the picture darker than the facts; in other words, not to overlook the consideration that in the aggregate the pleasures of animals probably exceed their pains. Again, from the standpoint of evolution it may be said that perfection of life is a higher end than mere sensuous pleasure, that struggle is the necessary means of development, and that sensibility, with consequent liability to suffering, is an indispensable incentive to struggle. And in truth it is reasonable to affirm that the end outweighs the expense of the process. If we admit the Christian conception of an everlasting kingdom of perfected rational beings, we have good ground to affirm that it is appropriate that the whole creation should travail and groan in pain until now, provided such a consummation cannot be otherwise reached. But it is just this proviso which is the point of difficulty. The question arises, why could not the end have been reached without the vast expenditure? Why the long reign of suffering and death in the animal kingdom before man's advent and the beginning of his education? It would mitigate the problem in one aspect, if we could suppose that the generations of animals which have gone to their death were not mere antecedents to men, but in some way are comprehended in the end, and so gain a requital for their share of misery and mortality. The words of Paul, Rom. viii. 19–22, if pressed to the utmost limit of their possible significance, can be made to support this view. But it is doubtful whether Paul meant to assert that the past generations of animals are

to live again. His words seem rather to be a poetical or oratorical expression of the more general thought, that man must reach his goal before irrational nature can reach her goal, that the transfiguration of the former must precede the transfiguration of the latter, and that, accordingly, the latter may figuratively be represented as feeling the bonds of its imperfection and corruption, and groaning after the state of incorruption which is to characterize the new heavens and the new earth. It is to be noted, moreover, that the assignment of animals to a part in the future life, if it eliminates one difficulty, makes another. Certainly, unless our æsthetic standards are to change, there are some animal types that we could not regard as embellishments of the world to come.

The old explanation of natural evil as purely subordinate to a moral end, as an object-lesson or means of discipline to men, is not fully adapted to the modern scientific view of the world. The trouble is, there is vastly more object lesson than has been utilized or seems to be necessary. As the volume to the page, so is the history of animal life preceding man to that which is contemporary with his career. Thus the long reign of suffering and death is not adequately explained from this point of view. Granting that everything in nature may properly be made tributary to a moral end, no one can see that the vast quantum of suffering and death has actually been made thus tributary.

Our conclusion then is, that we cannot fully explain natural evil as a constituent in the world process. We can believe that within the limits of the animal kingdom the good or the pleasurable has exceeded the evil or painful; we can admit the possibility that within the given area of the world a scheme of comparatively rapid succession of birth and death may provide for a larger sum of sensuous enjoyment than could be realized in a scheme contemplating few individuals and a much longer term of existence; we can see the propriety of mingling with the environment of a probationary

sinful being enough of the sombre element to remind of judgment and to wean from undue earthliness; we can cherish the supposition that compensations are provided, either in the present or in the future, for the disproportionate suffering which seems to befall not a few members of the human family; but actual insight into the wisdom and benevolence of the world scheme as respects all its contents we must acknowledge we do not possess. As was indicated in the treatment of the divine attributes, the outlook upon the world will ever need to be supplemented by the vision of Christian faith. It is only when God is seen as He is revealed in Christ, that it becomes fully possible for us to believe that He is one who notes the fall of the sparrow, and numbers the very hairs upon the heads of His children.

The subject of miracles having been sketched in another connection, it is not necessary here to justify the conclusion that God's providence is, or may be, exercised in special as well as in ordinary ways. As the scheme of impersonal nature is only His method of working, and all therein is perfectly plastic to His hands, it makes no sort of difficulty, collision, or catastrophe, for Him to bring in any new fact or factor which it suits His wisdom to introduce. To suppose that the course of nature obstructs the answer to any prayer which it is worth while to answer, is to give a false independence to nature and to exalt it above its instrumental position before God.

While we are not required to think of the ordinary course of natural law as a perfectly fixed barrier, limiting the scope of divine answers to prayer, there is no occasion to deem such events as intrinsically out of harmony with the conception of law in general. The proper notion of law requires that where the conditions are modified the results should be modified. Prayer enters into the complex of a human life as a modifying condition, and ought accordingly to bring special results. It is

needless to add that it is only for genuine prayer that any salutary effect is claimed. Offered mechanically, or as a merit-winning performance, it becomes a poor counterfeit. In its true character it is the earnest, sincere, trustful approach of the child to the infinite Father.

Part III.

THE SUBJECTS OF GOD'S MORAL GOVERNMENT.

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CHAPTER I.

ANGELS.

I. — The Point of View from which the Bible Deals with Angelology.

In treating of physical nature the Bible proceeds from the geocentric point of view. The heavens are not indeed ignored. The scriptural poets, like all men of poetic sensibility, had hearts deeply responsive to the scene of harmony and glory presented by the heavenly bodies. In voicing the language of worship and faith, to which that scene inspires, no writers have excelled the psalmists and prophets of Israel. Still, in the biblical view of physical nature, the earth is the great central theatre, and the heavenly bodies are regarded as tributary in their office to its requirements.

The same may be said of the biblical view of the rational creation. As a practical book, addressed to men, the Bible places man at the centre. Not ignoring, but rather clearly intimating, the existence of another order of rational beings, it treats of them only as they are tributary to the divine

economy in relation to men. In other words, it reveals no independent interest, or next to none, in angelology.[1]

The comparison suggests an inquiry as to the proportion of the rational creation which is embraced in men. May it not be that a Bible written from another than the human standpoint would open up to us such views about the extent of the rational creation as modern astronomy gives us about the physical universe in its unspeakable transcendence of earthly dimensions? It would be over-dogmatic to reply with a decided *yes*, or a decided *no*, to this question. The most that can be said is, that analogy favors the conclusion that the range of intelligent beings above and beyond men is of vast extent. In the subject of angelology revelation opens the door upon a region of indefinite bounds. We see the shining ranks in the foreground, but have no means of discovering how far back the celestial army extends.

II. — Main Facts Respecting the Development of Biblical Angelology.

The theme of angelology being one that is rather enticing to the imagination, it might be expected that popular thought would outrun the data of revelation. That this was the case in Judaism is entirely certain. The Old Testament Apocrypha and later Jewish writings show the facility with which the religious fancy enlarged upon this subject.

While the canonical writers exhibit reticence and sobriety in comparison with those who came after them, it is antecedently probable that on a theme like this, holding an incidental

[1] A due consideration of the anthropocentric point of view, characteristic of the Bible, will help to provide an answer to such an objection as Beyschlag brings against the supposition that angels are personal beings, namely, the purely instrumental place assigned to them in the Scriptures. A book which limits its survey by constant reference to man and his destiny could not be expected to treat angels as ends in themselves.

place in their discourse, they drew somewhat from the products of religious fancy and popular conception. No one certainly, who has passed beyond the simplicity of childhood, would dream that the ascription of wings to cherubim and seraphim by Ezekiel and Isaiah involves the fact that angelic beings have these appendages. With scarcely more reason is it to be supposed that we are in the region of literal fact when we read Daniel's representation of the connection of specific angels with specific nations.[1] Items of this sort belong rather to the drapery of the subject than to its dogmatic substance. The latter, as will be illustrated presently, does not contain many particulars.

Three or four periods may be distinguished in the progress of biblical angelology. In the period prior to the great prophetical era, or from Abraham to Amos, visitations of angels are recorded at intervals. Aside from the Jehovah-angel, who, in virtue of intimate association with a divine personality had an exceptional character, these messengers appear in common as agents of the Lord, temporarily commissioned, and distinguished by no special titles or ranks.[2] Among the pre-exilian prophets there is no token of an advance upon this conception. These prophets seem, moreover, not to have given very much attention to the functions of angels. Mediation between God and Israel is represented as effected through the prophets without the intervention of heavenly beings. On the other hand, in the later group of prophets[3] angels are made conspicuous as bearers of the divine message to the prophets themselves, distinctions of rank are noticed, and in general there is an appearance of a more developed angelology. Contact with Persian thinking has been mentioned as affording an explanation of the difference. Some impulse may have been derived from that source, though it is entirely conceivable that by an interior development Jewish angelology might have been

[1] Dan. x. 13, 21, xii. 1.

[2] Joshua v. 13–15 is perhaps an exception.

[3] See especially Daniel and Zechariah.

carried forward to the later phase.[1] The New Testament, if it does not multiply accounts of the visible appearances of angels, lays a foundation for an enlarged conception of their invisible agency.

III. — Matters More or Less Clearly Revealed Respecting Angels.

The points on which the Bible approaches in some measure to positive representations on the subject of angels may be specified as follows: —

(1) In idea, and very largely in fact, they are holy and obedient servants of God.[2] (2) They have been on probation, as is evinced by the fall of some of them.[3] It may be noticed that the distinct declaration, that some of the angels kept not their original condition and habitation, occurs only in 2 Peter and Jude, writings which belong to a secondary rank as regards the warrant for their canonical character. But as their statement is in line with the natural inference from a combination of scriptural and rational grounds, there is little reason to emphasize its singularity.[4] (3) Angels are numerous.[5] (4) They are not possessed of gross bodies, if they have

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[1] "The Jews," says Stave, "did not, as respects their angelology, simply borrow outright the teachings of the Persians; they only allowed the development of their own teachings to be influenced from that source." (Ueber den Einfluss des Parsismus auf das Judenthum, 1898, pp. 217, 218.) On the side of diabology, the same author credits to the Persian system a nearer approach to a direct contribution of content to Jewish teaching.

[2] Matt. xiii. 39, 41, xviii. 10, xxiv. 36, xxv. 31; Mark viii. 38; Luke ix. 26, xii. 8, 9. xv. 10; 1 Tim. v. 21.

[3] 2 Pet. ii. 4; Jude 6. See also 1 Tim. iii. 6; Rev. xii. 4.

[4] It is possible that the figurative passage in Revelation (xii. 4) which describes the dragon as sweeping a third part of the stars from heaven may have been designed to denote a fall of angels. However, a comparison with Dan. viii. 10 cannot be regarded as favoring so large a significance.

[5] Matt. xxvi. 53; Heb. xii. 22.

any bodies at all, and do not enter into connubial relations.[1] (5) They exhibit distinctions of rank.[2] It is to be observed, however, that these distinctions are not given with much definiteness. Paul varies in his enumeration of the angelic ranks, and seems to have mentioned them only for the purpose of emphasizing the truth that nothing is exempt from the headship of Christ. (6) They are not of a dignity which makes it in any wise warrantable to worship them, though in some points of view they are above men.[3] Paul's interrogatory, "Know ye not that ye shall judge angels?"[4] implies indeed a certain preeminence of the saints over angels, if it be concluded that his reference is to the holy, and not to the fallen class. Some eminent commentators adopt the former interpretation; but certainly the way in which the evangelic narrative associates good angels with the closing up of the dispensation is far from suggesting that in any real sense they are amenable to human judgment. The ministry of angels to men is of course, from the gospel standpoint, no valid evidence of their inferiority in station. (7) The antithesis which in general is set forth in the Scriptures between angels and men favors the conclusion that the two belong to different orders.[5] That the angel in the Apocalypse styles himself a fellow-servant with the evangelist and the prophets (xix. 10) in no wise contradicts this conclusion, the obvious intent of the declaration being to show that there is no such disparity between an angelic and a human witness to Christ as to make it proper that the former should be worshipped. The Swedenborgian view that angels are but deceased men lacks scriptural grounds. (8) Angels are engaged in contemplating the counsels of God, in adoration, and in accomplishing the behests of divine judg-

[1] Heb. i. 14; Mark xii. 25.
[2] 1 Thess. iv. 16; Eph. i. 21, iii. 10; Col. i. 16, ii. 10.
[3] Col. ii. 18; Rev. xix. 10; Heb. ii. 7; 2 Pet. ii. 11.
[4] 1 Cor. vi. 3.
[5] Mark xii. 25; Luke xx. 36; Heb. ii. 7, 16.

ment and mercy among men.[1] It has sometimes been inferred, especially from Matt. xviii. 10 and Acts xii. 15, that a guardian angel is appointed to each human individual. But the former passage does not state that a special angel is made the guardian of each little child, and the latter records only a popular notion. The Scriptures afford no positive warrant for the assumption of so definite and detailed a scheme of guardianship. (9) Angels are under the headship of Christ, and through Him are united to redeemed men in a harmonious fellowship.[2]

IV. — Points Open to Speculation.

Among the points left open for speculation is the time when angels were created. Revelation affords no certain ground of inference here. The representation in the Book of Job, that the "sons of God" were already on hand when the foundations of the earth were laid,[3] may be literal truth; but the statement occurs in a high strain of poetry, and is properly described as dramatic rather than dogmatic. It is, however, entirely credible. Supposing that other parts of the universe presented a scene of divine glory before the earth was fitted up for man's abode, it is reasonable to believe that sons of God were present to rejoice in that scene.

Another speculative question is whether angels have any sort of bodies. This question was diversely answered in the patristic period. The majority of the scholastics decided that angels are pure spirits, and Roman Catholic theology has followed this verdict. But the basis for the verdict is exceedingly tenuous. If it be noted that the Scriptures speak of angels as spirits,[4] it may also be observed that they speak of a spiritual body,[5] and affirm, moreover, that the risen saints are to be as

[1] 1 Pet. i. 12; Rev. v. 11, vii. 11; Ps. xci. 11, 12; Matt. xviii. 10; Luke xv. 10, xvi. 22; Acts vii. 53; Heb. i. 14; Matt. xiii. 41, 42.

[2] 1 Pet. iii. 22; Col. i. 20. [3] Job xxxviii. 7. [4] Heb. i. 14. [5] 1 Cor. xv. 44.

angels in heaven.[1] The language of Scripture would need to be more definite to assure us that angels are absolutely devoid of corporeity. If philosophy has any assurance to offer on the subject, it has not yet fallen under our notice.

Whether angels have bodies or not, they are to be regarded as subject to both space and time relations. The opposite has indeed been assumed. Thus Martensen affirms that angels are equally exempt from the conditions of space and time.[2] But how can a finite being be exempt from the one or the other? Complete exemption from the limitations of space implies ability to act equally and at once upon every part of reality. Anything less than this must give rise to a distinction of near and remote, or an experience of space limitation. Similarly complete exemption from time limitations implies capacity for an indivisible grasp of all reality. Without this there will be mental succession which is an experience of time limitations. Proper superiority to space and time relations can be characteristic of nothing less than the Infinite Being. It is to be concluded, therefore, that freedom from space and time restrictions can be asserted of angels only in a qualified sense. They may, perchance, pass with incalculable swiftness from one object to another, and are exempt from time in the sense that immortal youth is not subject to the marks of age which overtake mortals.

V. — Biblical Teaching Respecting Satan and Evil Angels.

As among men there are reprobates, as well as the elect of God, so evil angels or devils are set over against good angels. The existence of the moral antithesis in the latter case is no more incredible than in the former. If any

[1] Mark xii. 25. [2] Dogmatik, § 68.

peculiar difficulty attaches to the subject of evil angels, it belongs to their agency, and not to the fact of their existence. It is appropriate to observe also that it is not easy, on the score of exegetical consistency, to rule out the existence of evil angels, without at the same time bringing into question the reality and ministry of the order which brightens the field of religious vision.

While the Old Testament introduces the theme of Satan and his working, it gives it a very scanty development. His name first appears in the Book of Job, and it cannot be said that the idea of his personality was sketched in any earlier canonical writings. A few vague references to uncanny creatures or sprites, reflecting popular fancies, may have been written previously;[1] but these were not adapted to prefigure the personality of Satan.

In later thought the narrative of the temptation in Eden has been interpreted as referring to Satan; but the narrative itself conveys no definite hint that the writer supposed Satan to have figured in that scene, though it may be admitted that it is a little difficult to imagine that he should have construed the serpent in a baldly literal way. The connection of the arch enemy with the defection of Adam is not referred to in the canonical books of the Old Testament, and is not directly affirmed in the New Testament. The Book of Revelation, it is true, speaks of Satan as the "old serpent";[2] and in this there is a probable reference to the primal temptation, though it still stands in question whether the Revelator thought of the tempting serpent as Satan in disguise, and not simply as an apt symbol of the arch deceiver. In the apocryphal Book of Wisdom we first meet the inference that the serpent was the instrument of Satan, it being said therein that man fell by the envy of the devil.[3]

[1] Isa. xiii. 21, xxxiv. 14; Lev. xvii. 7.

[2] Rev. xii. 9, xx. 2. See also John viii. 44; 2 Cor. xi. 3; Rom. xv. 20.

[3] Wisdom ii. 23–25.

According to the common opinion of the early fathers an account of fallen angels is contained in Gen. vi. 2, 4, and Jewish interpreters of the same era seem to have found the like meaning in these verses.[1] Recent exegesis tends to confirm the primitive view, that the "sons of God" in the passage were intended to denote angels.[2] It is not clear, however, whether the biblical writer conceived of their marriage with the daughters of men as involving irretrievable apostasy and downfall.

The Old Testament stands in contrast with the New in that it does not represent Satan as so sharply and distinctly the antagonist of God. In the Book of Job he appears as the insinuator against the righteous fidelity of God's servant, the slanderous accuser. In the prophecy of Zechariah (iii. 1) he stands as the adversary of the cause of the Jewish theocracy impersonated in the high priest; and in 1 Chron. xxi. 1 he figures in a similar rôle. These representations, of course, imply an unfriendly relation to divine purposes, but they do not picture the remorseless enemy of God who comes to view in the New Testament. How is the contrast to be explained? Dorner supposes a deepening progress of Satan himself into the malignity and darkness of moral evil, and that the acme

[1] Book of Enoch vi., vii.; Book of Jubilees v.; Apocalypse of Baruch lvi.

[2] As specimens of the use of the phrase see Job i. 6, ii. 1, xxxviii. 7; Ps. xxix. 1. lxxxix. 6; Dan. iii. 25. The later interpretation, which identifies the "sons of God" with the Sethites is justly criticised by Dillmann as follows: "There is nothing in our text about a contrast between Sethite men and Cainite women. It is not hinted, either in chapter iv. or chapter v., that down to this time the Sethite list embraced only pious men, or that between the Sethites and the Cainites there was any barrier, the breaking down of which must draw after it a special judgment of God. The expression "sons of God" for pious men is as yet unusual in the Old Testament. Although starting from the idea of the divine sonship of Israel, the members of God's people, especially the really pious among them, received the title in writing of an exalted character, it was not used of the pious generally, least of all in prose writing. It is impossible that in the apodosis, verse 2, האדם can mean anything else than in the protasis in verse 1. It is inconceivable how Nephalim should have sprung from connections between Sethite men and Cainite women." (Genesis, 1, 234.)

— the falling like lightning from heaven, as it is figuratively described[1] — was precipitated by his antipathy to the mission of Christ.[2] But while growth in wickedness may have been a fact, the progressive representation in Scripture on this subject may be explained on the same principle which accounts for the like feature in relation to other themes. Whether Satan was full grown or not when the Book of Job was composed, biblical writers had then a narrower apprehension of the kingdom of evil than was gained later.

New Testament language is indicative of a chieftainship in Satan over the kingdom of evil. Other evil angels are mentioned as demons of whom he is prince,[3] or as his angels.[4] He is further described as the prince of this world,[5] and is even called the god of this world.[6] Such statements are naturally suggestive of a certain preëminence of Satan over the ranks of evil. But there is very slight demand for applying to them the measuring rod of literal interpretation. How far spirits sold to evil are capable of an abiding unity and organization properly stands in question. Moreover, the Scriptures may be regarded as using the word Satan, or devil, very largely in a collective or representative sense. That is attributed to him which is within the ability of the whole kingdom or aggregate of evil spirits to effect. His power and presence are those of a finite limited agent. As well attribute omnipresence to any angelic or human spirit as to suppose that Satan can act in person in all parts of the world at once.

The definition of Satan as only a personification of the evil at work in men is not fully reconcilable with the tenor of the New Testament. Personification, doubtless, was quite congenial to the religious custom of the age. The use of the word Mammon and, to some extent, also, that of Antichrist are examples. Still New Testament teaching relative to an

[1] Luke x. 18.
[2] System of Christian Doctrine, § 86.
[3] Matt. xii. 24–29. Compare Acts x. 38.
[4] Matt. xxv. 41; Rev. xii. 7–9.
[5] John xii. 31, xiv. 30, xvi. 11.
[6] 2 Cor. iv. 4.

evil personality seems in various connections to reach beyond mere personification. It is difficult, for example, to interpret in that sense the reported words of Christ, which declare that the devil is the enemy who sowed tares in the field,[1] and that he stood not in the truth, being a liar and the father of lies.[2]

Still less is there adequate ground for qualifying the personality of Satan by assuming that he is a cosmic principle, which rises into consciousness only in free and intelligent beings who yield themselves to be its organs. A moral agent must always and everywhere be regarded as going before moral evil. It is wholly generated in such an agent. To place its root outside in an impersonal principle denies the goodness of the world as it came from the hand of God, and confuses the nature of moral evil by giving it something else than a proper ethical source. Very little, if anything, is effected by this theory to make the fact of moral evil less somber, and it rather enlarges than reduces the responsibility of the Creator in relation to its origin.

The element in the working of Satan and evil spirits which is most perplexing to the modern reader is that which is currently described as demoniacal possession. Had the Gospels spoken simply of temptations, or evil suggestions, as coming from this source, no very serious difficulty would have been involved, since, for aught we know, the like things are still included among actual occurrences. But we have numerous instances in which demons are said to inhabit men, and to be in them the source of mental and physical disorders. The reality of this inhabitation has been challenged on the ground that among civilized people in modern times, no like instances are presented; and also on the ground that the symptoms of the demoniacs were in general those of lunatics. The former objection is qualified by the fact that no authentic diagnosis

[1] Matt. xiii. 39. [2] John viii. 44.

of all cases of distempered persons in civilized communities of modern times is within reach so as to assure us that no instances of possession have occurred within those limits. Some allowance may also be made to the thought that a special crisis in the spiritual kingdom may have evoked special manifestations. There belonged to that era, in the gift of tongues, a transient order of manifestations of the presence of the Divine Spirit. So analogously there may have been an extraordinary manifestation of spiritual agency of the evil sort. The second objection is qualified by the considerations, that an overmastering diabolic influence might conceivably be the cause of acute mental and physical disorders, and that some things attributed to the demoniacs are not altogether explained by lunacy. How should crazed persons, above all other men, have been conscious of the supernatural dignity of Christ?

While an answer may thus be rendered to these objections, a complete survey of New Testament facts still suggests the inquiry whether it is necessary to construe the stories of demon possession with strict literalness. Here two considerations in particular come into account. The first of these is found in the peculiarity of the Jewish religious dialect. As in its impassioned phrase God was often named as agent where we should not think of attributing the event to Him, so likewise a freer reference was made to Satanic agency than suits our mode of speaking. A readiness to attribute physical evils to a supernatural source was part of the religious fashion of the country and the age. Even a man of Paul's mental vision could speak of a special bodily affliction as a messenger of Satan to buffet him. Naturally where the evils were of a strange and baffling nature there was a relatively strong incentive to predicate an evil supernaturalism as their source. The popular mind, it is conceivable, was led to express under the representation of possession its vivid sense of the working of a Satanic power in the subjects of peculiar and grievous ailments. As for the more thoughtful, while making a general

connection of such events with a diabolic agent, and falling in with the current phraseology, they are not necessarily presumed to have been tenacious of the specific notion of possession. The other consideration supplements the foregoing, being found in the fact that a large part of the New Testament makes no real account of demoniacal possession. All the recorded instances of the inhabitation of demons are in the Synoptical Gospels and the Book of Acts. In John's Gospel there is no reference to facts of this order except in the mouth of Christ's opponents. Satan is indeed said to have entered into Judas ; but this description is not to be taken in the sense of demoniacal possession, which acted as a disturbing cause in the sphere of self-consciousness, and besides seems more often to have been the misfortune of its subject that a penalty for special sinfulness. In the Johannine writings generally, in the Pauline Epistles, in fact in the whole body of New Testament Epistles, there is no representation that gives any positive support to the idea of possession proper. These writings stop with the general notion that evil spirits are agents of seduction and sources of harmful influence. There is thus a noticeable lack in the apostolic literature of any dogmatic interest in the specific conception of demoniacal possession.

A combination of these two considerations — namely, the peculiarity of the religious dialect of the Jews, and the absence of all reference to possession proper in the more constructive portions of the New Testament — lends considerable color to the contention that it was beyond the design of Christ to pronounce definitely on the precise facts in the condition of the so-called demoniacs, that He dealt with the cases which He encountered like a practical physician, and accommodated Himself largely to the religious dialect of His age and country. A measure of accommodation in the matter is certainly not to be tabooed as incredible. It would be over-finical, for example, to say that Christ could not, following the demands of ordinary and simple language, have spoken as if the demon dwelt

in the afflicted subject, though the indwelling were only by power or influence, analogous to that which a hypnotizer exercises over the hypnotized. On the other hand, it involves a very considerable assumption of knowledge to exclude positively the notion of an evil spiritual agency, and to reduce to sheer accommodation Christ's references to the matter. The confident assertion of this point of view we prefer to leave to those who have a measure of insight into facts and possibilities such as we are not yet conscious of possessing.

In the New Testament picture the fate of Satan and his angels is not left doubtful. It is declared that everlasting fire is appointed to them, and that they are to be cast into the lake of fire and brimstone to be tormented for ever and ever.[1] No glimmer of restoration shines through these strong figures. Intrinsically, sinning angels may not be beyond recovery. There is no warrant for assuming that a redemptive economy has no place in relation to them. All that is known to us is that Satan and the evil angels leagued with him appear in the New Testament at a stage where grace in their behalf is not contemplated.

VI. — The Reason why God Tolerates the Agency of Satan and Evil Angels.

The question which the Indian addressed to Eliot, "Why does not God kill the devil?" solicits attention from other than untutored minds. The inquiry comes, why this age-long toleration of the adversary, the enemy, the mischief-maker? A complete answer is not easily discovered, as indeed it is not easy to find a complete answer to the question, why providence tolerates year after year the ruthless human being who makes a trade of overthrowing the weak and corrupting the innocent.

[1] Matt. xxv. 41; Rev. xx. 10.

But a partial answer may be found in the preëminence of moral methods in the divine estimate. To bind and overmaster Satan by sheer force would not be the greatest victory. To carry weak mortals through the assaults of evil, to establish in them a righteous will which spurns the solicitations of the tempter, to lift them up to the estate of sons of God, and marshall them into a loyal army whose devotion shall for ever shame the apostate host, is the way to the incomparable triumph over Satan and his angels. Their manœuvrings are thus foiled. Out of this world, which they struggle to rule, rises the immortal kingdom which emphasizes their defeat. If any are made a prey to their wiles, it is because of their rejection of the sufficient grace.[1] Improvement of the open opportunity of divine fellowship, as it defends against moral harm from evil human agents, provides security against the adverse power of any agents that may have access to the sphere of man's life.

Of the general theme of the evil kingdom it may be said, that it belongs rather to the outer circle of religious theory and imagination than to the inner circle of practical interests. The sources out of which unholy impulses arise are quite beyond the range of our perception. To explore, in this relation, what lies below or beyond consciousness is no part of the task of practical piety. The religious man fulfills his obligation when he endeavors to measure rightly the force of intruding evil, and strives to the best of his ability to encounter and defeat it at the threshold of consciousness. Travelling earnestly in a Godward direction he is privileged to let the shadow of the evil kingdom recede toward a far-off horizon.

[1] 1 Cor. x. 13; James iv. 7.

CHAPTER II.

MEN.

I. — Factors in Man's Being.

The Bible contains doubtless much more of an anthropology than of an angelology. Nevertheless it treats of man from special points of view, and enters into an analysis of his nature only so far as is required by those points of view. It contemplates him as a subject of divine rule, and a candidate for a holy and blessed life, both in this world and in that which is to come. Revelation finds its province within these limits, and cannot be regarded as decisively controlling what is merely incidental thereto. In other words, the Bible by authority gives a certain core of anthropology, certain leading conceptions which are never lost sight of; but admits, also, many representations which can be regarded as mere matters of national speech or personal thinking.

A different view has indeed been advocated by individual theologians. Detailed schemes of biblical psychology have been drawn out, as if the Bible afforded, and was meant to afford, a comprehensive and authoritative chart of human nature. Such schemes are interesting as specimens of industrious research. But they are not well adapted to secure confidence. They can be charged with an insufficient consideration of the variety which characterizes the biblical statements, and which is so much testimony that its psychological terms are not to be construed too rigorously.

Take, for example, the Old Testament names for the higher component, or components, in man's being, namely, soul, spirit,

heart — *nephesh*, *ruach*, *lebh*.[1] It is true that these terms are not exactly co-extensive in meaning. The first alone is used as a substitute for *person*;[2] and the third has a more distinct association with moral character than the other two, and, singularly enough, is more often represented as the seat of thought or meditation. Still, to a very large extent the terms are employed in equivalent senses, being used to denote any part of man's supersensuous nature, emotional, intellectual, volitional, or moral.[3] A comparison of all the passages in which one or more of these words is used enforces this conclusion of Piepenbring: "We must admit that on this subject the authors of the Old Testament used popular language and not that of the schools; that they spoke of the human soul, spirit and heart as we ourselves often speak of them, that is, including under each of these terms our entire spiritual being with all its faculties."[4]

In the New Testament we find the corresponding Greek terms — ψυχή, πνεῦμα, and καρδία — used with much the same latitude and flexibility.[5] A principal distinction is that in the Pauline Epistles a certain primacy is given to the *spirit*. It is used prevailingly in preference to the term "soul," in references to man's higher nature. In a prayer for the complete sanctification of disciples, body, soul, and spirit are mentioned as if they formed an ascending series.[6] Moreover, the adjec-

[1] לֵב, רוּחַ, נֶפֶשׁ [2] As in Gen. xii. 5, xvii. 14; Ezek. xviii. 4.

[3] See, among other passages, Gen. xxvi. 35, xli. 8; Deut. ii. 30, iv. 29, vi. 5, xiii. 3, xxviii, 65; Josh. ii. 11, xxiii. 14; Job xxvii. 2, xxxii. 8; Ps. vi. 3, xiii. 2, xxxii. 2, xxxiv. 18, xlii. 6, li. 10, 17, lxxvii. 6, xcv. 10. ci. 5, cxxxi. 2, cxliii. 4; Prov. xii. 25, xiv. 10, xx. 27, xxi. 4, xxviii. 25; Isa. xxvi. 8, 9, xxix. 24, lvii. 15, lxi. 10, lxv. 14; Jer. xv. 16; Ezek. xi. 19, xviii. 31, xxi. 7, xxxvi, 26.

[4] Theology of the Old Testament, p. 165.

[5] Matt. x. 28, xxii. 37, xxvi. 38; Luke ii. 35; Acts iv. 32; 1 Thess. v. 23; Heb. x. 38, 39; 1 Pet. i. 22, ii. 11; Mark viii. 12; Luke viii. 35; Acts xvii. 16; Rom. viii. 4; 1 Cor. ii. 11, vii. 34; 2 Cor. ix. 7; Heb. iv. 12; Matt. v. 8, xi. 29, xii. 34, xv. 19, xviii. 35; Mark ii. 8, xvi. 14; Luke ii. 19, ix. 47, xxiv. 25, 32; Rom. vi. 17, x. 10; 1 Cor. ii. 9; 1 John iii. 19–21.

[6] 1 Thess. v. 23.

tive terms corresponding to soul and spirit are used antithetically, to the disparagement of the former.[1] These facts give some plausibility to the supposition that Paul regarded soul and spirit as substantially distinguished, and thus represented trichotomy as opposed to dichotomy. But, on the other hand, it is to be noticed that the apostle did not always use the term soul in the restricted or disparaging sense,[2] and that in any case it cannot be maintained that he dogmatically inculcated trichotomy. If his language in a few instances seems to imply it, all that can be said is, that we have incidentally a glimpse of his personal philosophy. As for the New Testament at large, it renders no definite tribute to trichotomy. On the contrary, it uses the word soul in various connections as if it was understood to embrace the entire supersensuous nature of man.[3] In short, if it were to be contended that the Scriptures prescribe any theory, more could probably be said in favor of their teaching dichotomy than for the notion that they inculcate trichotomy. But the better conclusion is that they authoritatively teach neither the one nor the other. While the antithesis between the sensuous and the supersensuous nature in man, between that which connects him with the physical world and that which connects him with God, is woven into its very texture, the Bible leaves open the question whether man is dual or triple in his essence. This question must be determined on rational grounds.

Viewing the subject from this standpoint, we have no hesitation in pronouncing for dichotomy, as being commended by its greater simplicity and intelligibility. The contrast between matter and spirit is sharp and decisive. The terms which describe the one have no imaginable application to the other.

[1] 1 Cor. xv. 44–46.

[2] Rom. ii. 9, xiii. 1; 2 Cor. i. 23; Eph. vi. 6; Col. iii. 23; Phil. i. 27. (See Greek text.)

[3] Matt. x. 28; Luke xii. 19, 20; Acts ii. 27; Heb. x. 39; 1 Pet. i. 9, 22, ii. 11; Rev. vi. 9, xx. 4. On the other hand, Heb. iv. 12 and Jude 19 can be quoted as apparently distinguishing between soul and spirit.

It is impossible for us to figure any mean between them. If the soul, therefore, is made substantially distinct from the spirit, we can construe it only as a kind of subordinate spirit functionally intermediate between the body and the higher spirit. But what need of two grades of spirit in one person? How reconcile this duality with personal unity? The body does not compromise that unity, inasmuch as its place is purely instrumental. Shall it be said that the intermediate spirit or soul is purely instrumental to the higher? This seems to be necessary if personal unity is to be conserved. Two independent centres or springs of action imply a dual rather than a single consciousness. But what need of two instruments? If we cannot see how the spirit can make prac tical connection with the body, no more can we see how the soul, which must be viewed as equally immaterial, can make that connection. Whatever functions, then, are associated with the soul might just as well be associated with the spirit, or the latter be regarded as operative in them at first hand instead of at second hand. The intermediate substance is thus discredited as an apparent superfluity.

If it be assumed that man is not sufficiently distinguished from the animal kingdom unless he is credited with an extra essence, a spirit in addition to a soul, the reply is that man does not need to be distinguished by a greater number of components, but by the higher grade of those which he does possess. At one end of the scale the endowments of the same immaterial essence in man may be on a line with animal life, while at the other end they rise into the sphere of divine associations.

It is worthy of note that while the Bible broadly distinguishes between body and soul, or body and spirit, it indulges in no essential disparagement of the former. The ascetic theory, which assumes an intrinsic evil in the body, is alien from the scriptural standpoint. If the whole course of its teaching be taken into account, the Bible must be regarded

as including in its ideal of man the union and reconciliation of nature and spirit. On no other supposition can a rational explanation be given of its doctrine of the resurrection. This doctrine is a seal upon the verdict in the creation narrative. It shows at least that, with regard to man's body, God has not withdrawn the sentence of approbation which he is said to have pronounced upon His works.

Something of an antithesis is indeed presented in the Old Testament between the body or flesh of man and divine reality. But it is the antithesis between feebleness and transitoriness, on the one hand, and might and stability on the other.[1] The Old Testament never employs the term "flesh" as antithetic to moral good.

In the New Testament, it must be allowed, there is a verbal contrast between the flesh and moral good. This occurs mainly in the writings of Paul. All instances, outside of his epistles, of an apparent disparagement of the flesh are very easily explained. But Paul's usage seems to afford some pretext for an ascetic theory. He employs such strong expressions as these: "I know that in me, that is, in my flesh (σάρξ), dwelleth no good thing."[2] "I delight in the law of God after the inward man: but I see a different law in my members warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity under the law of sin which is in my members."[3] "The mind of the flesh is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can it be."[4] "The flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh; for these are contrary the one to the other."[5] What did Paul mean by these sentences? That he did not mean to condemn man's sensuous nature as in itself sinful is abundantly apparent. It appears from the fact that he thought of the Christ, who knew no sin, as truly assuming human flesh.[6] It

[1] Job xxxiv. 15; Ps. lvi. 4; lxxviii. 39; Isa. xl. 6; Jer. xvii. 5.
[2] Rom. vii. 18. [3] Rom. vii. 22, 23. [4] Rom. viii. 7. [5] Gal. v. 17.
[6] Gal. iv. 4; Rom. i. 3, v. 15; 1 Cor. xv. 21.

appears from his belief in the resurrection, or the continuance of the embodied life. It appears unmistakably in his representations that the body is properly a temple of the Holy Spirit, an acceptable offering to God through consecrated service, an instrument of righteousness.[1] It appears finally in the description of those who have experienced the emancipating power of divine grace through Christ as being no longer in the flesh[2] — a description which demonstrates that by the "flesh," when used in antithesis to moral goodness, Paul did not mean the sensuous nature *per se*, since, in that event, one could be out of the flesh only by being out of the body.

The conclusion necessarily follows, that in the Pauline doctrine of sin σάρξ has a larger meaning than the ordinary sense of the term. It epitomizes the whole earthward and sinful tendency which is characteristic of man in his fallen condition, and which finds in the bodily members the means at once of gratification and manifestation. It is not that the flesh is in itself sinful, but that it provides channels through which worldly appetencies and intemperate desires assert themselves, thus serving as an ever-ready ally of the soul on the side of its thirst for pleasure and selfish gratification, and in this way hindering the rule of moral judgment and righteous purpose. As the instrument and ally of the soul on that side of its tendencies, it stands in antithesis to the Divine Spirit in its alliance with the soul on the side of holy endeavor; and also in antithesis with the human spirit, in so far as it is viewed as immediately connected with the Divine Spirit and receptive of His renewing energy. Thus Paul's teaching cannot be regarded as breaking through the view of the body which is in general characteristic of the Bible. That he had small appreciation for any monastic scheme is clearly indicated by his instruction to the Colossians.[3]

[1] 1 Cor. vi. 13, 15, 19; Rom. vi. 13, 19, xii. 1.

[2] Rom. vii. 5, 6, viii. 4, 9.

[3] Col. ii. 20–23.

II. — Question of Exemption from Bodily Death.

In respect of his body man must be pronounced naturally mortal. The possibility of death was given in his original constitution. Made, like the countless generations of animals which preceded him, of material that is subject to corruption and dissolution, he had in his corporeal frame no security against mortality. On the plane of nature the fact that he was made of dust was a bond for his return to the dust.

It is true that the Scriptures represent man's death as the penalty or consequence of sin.[1] It is also true that in scriptural phraseology death is made inclusive of physical dissolution. This sense is indeed transcended in various connections. By a figure of speech grievous damage to the soul is described as death. But in this extension of the meaning of the term there is no denial of the view that physical death falls under the category of penalty or consequence of sin. Paul evidently gave it this association.[2] As for the author of the narrative in the first part of Genesis, it is altogether probable that he had no distinct thought of anything else than physical decay and dissolution when he wrote of the death affixed to the eating of the forbidden fruit.

To reconcile the truth of the natural mortality of the body with the scriptural conception of death as a penalty, it is necessary to suppose that the divine plan for man included some counteracting agency which should effectively offset all death-working influences. Human philosophy, if it cannot assert the fact of such a provision, cannot deny it. Surely we are not under rational compulsion to believe that God could not bring his children to their proper goal except through the gateway of corruption and death. If the embodied life belongs to the ideal of man, the painful severance of soul and body seems strangely off the road to that ideal, unless intro-

[1] Gen. ii. 17; Rom. v. 12–14, vi. 23; 1 Cor. xv. 22.

[2] 1 Cor. xv. 20–22.

duced as a stern means of discipline for a sinful subject. Accordingly, from any other standpoint than that of sheer naturalism, it is not incredible that some divine provision would have saved man, in the event of his holy obedience, from the ordeal of death, or at least excluded that ordeal from the category of an inevitable experience. In the primitive thought of Israel this expedient took the form of a tree of life accessible to the unfallen Adam. Translated from the language of concrete, poetic description into that of philosophy, this beautiful image may stand for the divine efficiency which would have been mediated to the human spirit, in its continued communion with God, and, through the human spirit thus vitalized, would have raised man's sensuous nature, without the experience of any painful disruption, to the state of the glorified life. No dogmatic authority is of course claimed for this description of what God's method would have been; it is simply an admissible supposition respecting what lies hid in the divine counsels.

III. — Question of the Soul's Immortality.

If we pass from the consideration of the body to that of the soul, we are not so obviously in the presence of mortality, but we still have occasion to inquire for our authority to affirm man's natural immortality. Rational considerations can, it is true, be urged in behalf of the conviction that the soul was designed for endless existence. Not a few have supposed that this conviction can properly be sustained by a reference to the simplicity of the soul's essence. Since it is not compounded, the argument runs, it cannot be subject to dissolution, and consequently there is no occasion to imagine the cessation of its being. The trouble with this argument is the implicit deism which lies at its basis. There is a tacit assumption that the circle of created things, having once been constituted, is

left to take its own course everlastingly. On this assumption, the soul, as meeting no cause that is competent to cancel its being, must of course be everlasting. But deny this assumption, declare the constant dependence of all created things upon the will and power of God, and the argument from the simple essence of the soul is shorn of its value. It imports very little to be assured that there is nothing in all nature which can put a stop to the soul's being, when we see that the title to continued existence rests wholly in the God who can be thought of as annihilating as well as creating, of ceasing to conserve as well as continuing to conserve.

A rational ground much more worthy to be alleged for faith in the soul's immortality is obtained in reviewing the range of its power and capacities. This subtle intellect which makes its pathway among the stars, this sense of righteousness which is capable of rising to such lofty heights, this royalty of a will-power which can defy all pressure that is brought to bear, this immeasurable capability of sympathy and affection — does it not show that man's soul has connections with the infinite, that it was formed for an immortal career? The argument is legitimate, and must have force with one who does not live habitually in a vile pessimistic mood. However, its limitations are not to be overlooked. It is a good argument for the immortality of some souls, namely of all who are in a way to realize their better possibilities. But suppose the contrary, souls with extinguished possibilities for good, a blot and a nuisance upon the face of the universe. Evidently in relation to such souls it is vain to appeal to man's noble capacities as a guarantee of endless existence. Unceasing opportunity for growth in goodness is something worthy of the Divine Sovereign to bestow. That He should deem it fitting to grant unceasing opportunity for growth or confirmation in badness is not capable of proof on rational grounds.

Much the same limitation applies to the argument from the religious consciousness. A settled and luminous sense of a

filial relation to God is indeed the most vital of all grounds of a subjective assurance of immortality. Out of this ground the inference rises spontaneously, that He who has infinite fullness of life in Himself will not consign to corruption and nothingness those whom He owns in the tender relation of children. *If children, then heirs* — heirs of an incorruptible inheritance — is a form of argument which only expresses a clear demand of the religious sentiment. But it evidently provides no certification respecting those who have forsaken the path of spiritual sonship and gravitated into incorrigible rebellion against God.

As the matter depends upon the plan of the divine administration, and there is no rational demonstration that in that administration all souls receive the dower of an inalienable existence, we can be asssured by nothing else than a divine revelation that immortality is the lot of all men indiscriminately. The question whether revelation has pronounced decisively on this point is best considered in connection with the theme of future retribution. But it may be noticed here that the Bible practically treats of man as a candidate for a limitless future. In the Old Testament, it is true, this point is not brought to the front. Only an occasional glimpse is given of a vital existence beyond the grave,[1] as opposed to the shade-like existence in *Sheol* which was commonly recognized in popular thought from the age of the patriarchs. Doubtless, in some of the fundamental conceptions of the Old Testament, relative to God and man, an excellent ground was provided for an inculcation of the thought of an immortal life.[2]

[1] As more or less indicative of the better hope the following texts may be noted: Deut. xxxii. 39; 1 Sam. ii. 6; Job xiv. 13–15, xix. 25–27; Hos. vi. 2; Ps. xvi. 10, xlix. 15, lxxiii. 24–26; Isa. xxv. 8, xxvi. 19, liii. 9, 10; Dan. xii. 2.

[2] "The earnest of a living hope was contained in the belief in a living God. The potency of a personal immortality was deposited in the faith in a personal God. The promise of a moral future lay in the recognition of the moral action of a righteous God in the present." Kindred potentialities lay in the Old Testament doctrine of man, "the way in which and the end for which he was created. The

In fact, however, it was only in the rarest instances that the development reached the level of a distinct declaration of belief, as distinguished from the language of simple premonition, the utterance of a hope projected beyond the ordinary creed by the motive-power of deep experiences. Reasons for this reserve may be found in the national and preliminary character of the Jewish religion. So far as that religion had to do with the training and mission of a nation it gave little occasion to speak of the future life; for nations belong only to the earthly theatre. Being antecedent to the coming of the Messiah, its forecast of the future naturally was associated very largely with the setting up of His kingdom. It would have involved a disjunction of religion from its true historic ground to have dwelt much upon the region of immortality before the advent and resurrection of Christ. The risen Lord must first be presented to the faith of men before the picture of the incorruptible life, in all the breadth and reach of its inspiring significance, could consistently be sketched. The apostles enjoyed a plane of vision such as had been vouchsafed to no preceding oracles of revelation. It was but natural, therefore, that in their writings the horizon should be set aglow, as never before, by the vivid hope and expectation with which the immortal life was grasped.

Immortality, whether viewed as conditional or unconditional, is evidently an item of vast significance in estimating the dignity of the human soul. It makes all the difference be-

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Old Testament thinks of man as the creature, not of nature or necessity, but of God, receiving his existence by God's free and immediate act, made like Him, and so constituted a free, personal being, distinct in origin and end from the beasts that perish. . . . It was the operation of these two great doctrines of revelation, as they were applied to the consciousness of Israel, as they came in contact with the popular, inherited notions of the future, as they were fortified by the personal experiences of pious men, and as they were confirmed in course of time by the positive teachings of the prophets, that enlarged and illumined the Old Testament view of an after-life. In this way the truth that was latent was brought to view, and was carried forward from stage to stage, until it became a permanent contribution to man's hope." (Salmond, The Christian Doctrine of Immortality, pp. 216, 221.)

tween vanity and priceless value whether its life is to run its course in a few days, or whether it is to go on for ever in an ascending pathway.

IV. — Theories as to the Origin of Souls.

It has sometimes been thought that human souls have a history prior to their embodied life in this world, as well as subsequent thereto. Origen, borrowing from Platonism, adopted this notion. But it has had a very scanty following among Christian writers. Not the slightest warrant for assuming the preëxistence of souls can be found in the Scriptures. No doubt in later Judaism the notion of preëxistence had considerable currency. It is found in the Book of Wisdom,[1] in the writings of Philo,[2] and in the Talmud.[3] Language that looks like an out-cropping of the same notion appears in a single instance in the New Testament, namely, in the question propounded to Christ, whether, in case of the man born blind, his own sin or that of his parents was the ground of the apparent judgment against him.[4] But this incidental manifestation of what may have been in the minds of the questioners lends, of course, no proper sanction to the doctrine of preëxistence. That no scriptural sentence can be cited for it is acknowledged by the most notable of recent theological advocates of preëxistence. Speaking of the doctrine in question Julius Müller says: "Any unprejudiced examination of Holy Scripture must satisfy us that it says nothing about it, and that no allegorizing expositions of Scripture, or rather impositions, can afford a clue to it."[5] He accepts it because he regards it as a necessary datum in explaining the facts of inborn sinfulness. In our view Müller exaggerates the facts,

[1] Wisdom viii. 19, 20.
[2] Confusion of Languages, xvii.
[3] Weber, Jüdische Theologie, p. 212.
[4] John ix. 1.
[5] Christian Doctrine of Sin, II. 360.

and, therefore, magnifies overmuch the demand for an explanation. But supposing the facts to be in serious need of explanation, it is rather questionable to assume a preëxistence of souls about which revelation is utterly silent, and consciousness knows nothing, and critical investigation cannot discover anything. If souls had such a decisive moral development in a previous state as the theory implies, it is reasonable to assume that they had also an appreciable intellectual development. Why then is no sign of that development to be found in the embodied subject? Why is the infant so utterly destitute of every trace of intellectual maturity, and obliged to gain every item of knowledge by the hard road of tuition and trial? The fact that the soul develops intellectually as if it first had its being along with its embodiment certainly does not favor the theory of preëxistence. In fine there is very little to recommend it, and probably the great majority of Christian writers will continue to repudiate it as a fanciful speculation.

Rejecting preëxistence, we are left with two rival theories as respects the origin of human souls in general, namely, traducianism and creationism, or the theory of derivation from parents and that of divine creation in each instance. The references of the Scriptures cannot be regarded as amounting to a certain choice of the one or the other. The description of God as the Father of the spirits of all men, in contrast with earthly parents as the fathers of their flesh,[1] seems indeed to imply creationism. Nothing equally favorable to traducianism can be cited. Still a traducianist can urge that the term "father" is used with much latitude in Scripture, and in this relation may denote, not so much that God is directly the author of human spirits, as that in the realization of His affectionate relation to men He operates through spiritual rather than through corporeal means, and is apprehended by the spirit rather than by the bodily senses. The

[1] Heb. xii. 9. Compare Zech. xii. 1; Isa. xlii. 5; Job xxxiii. 4; Eccl. xii. 7.

sentence in John's Gospel (iii. 6), which is sometimes quoted in favor of traducianism, determines nothing, one way or the other. It simply puts in contrast the state of man under the rule of fleshly appetites, which are matter of common inheritance through natural birth, and his state as supernaturally renewed by the Holy Spirit.

In the line of rational evidences each of the two theories has its deficit. The trying task for creationism is the explanation of heredity. The great stumbling-block for traducianism is its affinity with materialism, since it cannot be apprehended how the soul can come from the parents unless it is of separable divisible substance, whereas its spiritual nature requires it to be thought of as an indivisible unity, to which the idea of partition is utterly foreign. This is so serious an objection that the preference must be given to creationism if any tolerable explanation can be offered on its basis for heredity. As a matter of fact, a partial, if not a complete explanation, is afforded. The bodily organization of the child takes an impress from that of the parents through natural connection. In the early stages of the soul's development, before the era of reflection and self-control, this organization determines almost wholly the content of psychical experience. Parental characteristics have also an opportunity to transmit themselves through the intimate connection of the mother with the child during the embryonic period. The emotional tides which send their vibrations through her organism penetrate the sensitive being of the embryo. Not infrequently some marked bent or disposition of the offspring may be referred to a powerful emotional crisis in the mother. Thus physical connections with the parents, though they be not competent to determine directly the characteristics of the soul, do powerfully condition its experiences in its most plastic period, and these experiences are elements in shaping the personality, morally and intellectually, toward the type which it reaches. This explanation may not be entirely adequate, but it goes no

little way toward covering the facts which need to be accounted for, and so helps to legitimate the preference for creationism.

To some minds this theory is objectionable as supposing direct and specific operations of divine efficiency within the world. But the objection has no weight from the standpoint of Christian supernaturalism, or of a stanch theory of the divine immanence. If it is in the plan of God to regenerate souls under certain spiritual conditions, it is entirely conceivable that it may be in His plan to create them under certain physical conditions. This does not imply that He demeans Himself to wait on human appetencies. It signifies simply that He has adopted and continues to execute the world-scheme, or race scheme, which is, on the whole, most eligible in the sight of His wisdom.

Somewhat of a tendency has been manifested among recent theologians to combine creationism and traducianism, the supposition being that in the origination of souls God's creative energy works together with the parental agency, and makes of the latter something more than a mere occasion of its own operation. This would be an effective method of meeting all the requirements of the problem, if only the combination could be satisfactorily construed. But that is by no means certain. To create a free rational person seems to be among the highest acts of omnipotence. What real contribution a limited agent like man can make to such an act, aside from providing the mere occasion, is not easily conceived. Nevertheless, if traducianism is to be held at all, there is an intelligible motive for taking it in a modified sense. Modern philosophical thinking tends to a strong emphasis upon the divine immanence. To a considerable extent, it inclines to the identification of matter with a divine energizing. Now if material atoms are to be thought of as subsisting only by the direct agency of God, it seems a strange piece of philosophical procedure to exclude the direct agency of God from the origination of souls. Clearly, the advocate of an exclusive traducian

theory needs to consider well whether he is rendering a just tribute to the demands of a stanch conception of divine immanence and creaturely dependence.

The Scriptures assume that on the side of physical constitution mankind has proceeded from a single human pair. It is essentially one the world over.[1] Science in its most recent phases has no objection to offer to this conception. From the standpoint of evolution diversities of race are obviously no objection to unity of origin. If nature is capable of such vast mutations as are implied in the doctrine that all the higher forms of life may be traced back to preceding lower forms, it could involve no strain upon her resources to produce such variations as are exemplified in the different races of men. Moreover, the chasm between man and his supposed animal antecedents is so vast that discreet scientists, naturally, are not disposed to imagine that the leap across it could have been made except under the most select conditions. But, whether the utmost that evolutionary science claims be credited or not, there is scientifically no objection to the theory of the common origin of men. In view of the diversities which have been wrought by artificial selection in different species of animals, within a narrow space of time, it is not at all difficult to believe that the operation of special causes through long ages has given rise to all existing race peculiarities.

The question of the antiquity of the human race is one upon which Christian dogmatics has very little occasion to render a verdict. The conclusion being once reached that the Old Testament does not afford a basis for an exact chronology, either as admitting breaks into its genealogical lists, or as incorporating conjectural or legendary elements into its account of the primitive era, there is absolutely no motive for retrenching the period of human history to a particular figure. It would be saying too much, perhaps, to affirm that this con-

[1] Gen. i., ii.; Acts xvii. 26; Rom. v. 12, 18.

clusion has been commonly accepted by biblical scholars and historians; but it is true that it has commanded increasing assent among careful students during the last few decades. Reasons for pushing back the traditionary date are found, in the first place, in the discoveries of archæology. Eminent investigators conclude that the beginnings of civilized communities in Babylonia cannot be dated later than 4,000 B.C., and that an equal antiquity must be claimed for the commencement of Egyptian civilization.[1] In the second place, the results of geological research suggest a necessary extension of the term of human history. Corroboration has, indeed, been lacking for the enormous period assumed by Lyell and some others; but it is still true that experts in geology are inclined to regard ten thousand years as a very moderate period for man's past sojourn upon the earth, and to a considerable extent prefer to lengthen the time to twenty-five, fifty, or even one hundred thousand years.[2]

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[1] Says Morris Jastrow: "Our present knowledge of Babylonian history reaches back to the period of about 4,000 B.C. At that time we find the Euphrates valley divided into a series of states or principalities parcelling north and south Babylonia between them." (The Religion of Babylonia and Assyria, 1898, p. 35. Compare Fritz Hommel, Geschichte Babyloniens und Assyriens, 1895, pp. 166, 167, 282, 283; François Lenormant, The Beginnings of History, translated from the second French edition, 1883, pp. 250, 251; A. H. Sayce, The Ancient Empires of the East, 1884, pp. 14, 116; W. M. F. Petrie, History of Egypt from the Earliest Times to the XVI Dynasty, 1899, pp. 27–31, 252, 253; Heinrich Brugsch, Die Ægyptologie, 1891, p. 473; Mariette cited by Lenormant, Histoire Ancienne de l'Orient, II. 33–35; R. W. Rogers, Hist. of Babylonia and Assyria, I. 336, 349ff.

[2] The weight of authority seems to be in favor of man's appearance in Glacial or Interglacial time. The estimate by years is confessedly uncertain. Joseph Le Conte says; "We may say that we have as yet no certain knowledge of man's time on the earth, unless we adopt Croll's theory of the Glacial climate. It may be one hundred thousand years, or it may be only ten thousand years." (Elements of Geology, 1891, p. 619.) Joseph Prestwich, after premising that the Glacial epoch, or the period of extreme cold, may have lasted no longer than from fifteen thousand to twenty-five thousand years, and that the Post-glacial period, or the time occupied in the melting of the ice, may have covered from eight thousand to ten thousand years, adds: "This might give to palæolithic man, if we can be allowed to form a rough approximate limit, on data yet insufficient and subject to correc-

V. — Conscience.

The principal constituents which belong to man as a moral personality were necessarily touched upon in the first themes to which we gave our attention. On account of their evidential or philosophical value, they could not be ignored in an examination of the grounds of rational certainty or of theistic belief. But, as some additional points of view are pertinent to the present connection, it will not be a needless repetition to glance at man's furnishing on the side of the moral sense, or conscience, of freedom, and of religious disposition.

Conscience, if the term be taken in its broader meaning, is inclusive of three different elements: a perception of moral distinctions, a sense of obligation to the right, as opposed to the wrong, and a feeling of self-approbation or self-condemnation according as the act corresponds to the judgment of right and wrong. The first is undoubtedly subject to limitations. A man is not born an infallible moralist any more than he is born an infallible mathematician. But as he is implicitly a mathematician at birth, being endowed with a mental constitution which is intrinsically suited to recognize the relations of numbers, so he is implicitly a moralist at birth, being possessed of a moral constitution suited to recognize moral rela-

tion, no greater antiquity than perhaps about twenty thousand to thirty thousand years; while, should he be restricted to the so-called Post-glacial period, his antiquity need not go further back than ten thousand to fifteen thousand years before the time of neolithic man." As to neolithic man, Prestwich says: "In Europe we are unable to carry back his presence beyond a period of from two thousand to three thousand years B.C. But already in Egypt and parts of Asia it is proved that civilized communities and large states flourished before 4,000 B.C. Civilized man must, therefore, have had a far higher antiquity in those countries, and probably in southern Asia, than those four thousand to five thousand years." (Geology, Chemical, Physical, and Stratiographical, 1888, II. 534, 535.) Professor William North Rice, after noting the large element of uncertainty which belongs to any numerical estimate of man's antiquity that may be made in the present, says: "I should say that the date of the origin of man was probably considerably more than ten thousand years ago, but either less than, or not much more than one hundred thousand years ago." (Letter to the author, March 22, 1899.)

tions. The facts of his moral experience cannot be construed rationally on the supposition that he starts as a *tabula rasa* in respect of his moral being, any more than his intellectual experience can be construed without a reference to positive mental constituents. Grant that perversities of moral judgment often occur, and that education manifestly has a function to perform in relation to the moral sense, an original dower in the direction of true moral perception is not thereby denied. Were there no such dower there would be no adequate basis for a consensus of moral judgments. But there evidently is such a basis. Men cannot develop normally, or come into largeness and fullness of ethical life, without realizing an essential community of ethical principles through no inconsiderable range. Indeed there can be no development or even existence of moral personality without the presence, explicit or virtual, of a certain order of moral judgments. He who could not see that the good will, as opposed to the evil or malicious will, is obligatory, or that kindness ought to be repaid by gratitude rather than by hatred, would be described by common consent as utterly out of the plane of normal manhood. Still further, he who should deny the obligation to govern his own conduct by such rules as he deems fitting for men generally, or binding upon them, would be accounted as lacking an essential of a proper human nature. Now, a moral perception that inevitably appears with the moral personality, or inevitably is realized in the course of its normal development, has just one adequate explanation. It is founded in man's moral constitution. To derive it from any order of external circumstances is to impute the greater to the less. It is not the product of social relations, but founds society. Without a certain community of moral perceptions society would lack all true cohesion, and would rest upon a meagre artificial basis. Society has no other authority than that of an aggregate of individual wills. If these wills are individually destitute of the guidance of certain moral perceptions, their

aggregation gives no trustworthy law of conduct. The addition of nothing to nothing, however far it may be carried, results in nothing. Society, as a moral community, can be constituted only out of units that have a common moral constituent. That it does not make the morality of the individual, but has its moral character in its members, is clearly enough seen in the fact that, occasionally, a small company of earnest men, or even a single individual of exceptional character and gifts, will successfully challenge society on some special point and start the public current toward an improved moral perception.

Doubtless it is easy to exaggerate the compass of the original dower of which we are speaking. Moral vision is not wide at the beginning of the moral life. Experience and training have an important function in expanding and clarifying perceptions of duty. But these facts are in perfect harmony with the supposition of an original moral constitution which provides for certain standard moral judgments, in such sense that they are certain to be realized in any life that would not commonly be pronounced abnormal and monstrous.

The second element in conscience has a still clearer title to be regarded as founded in man's moral constitution. A person may hesitate in his judgments of right and wrong, and may make mistakes in these judgments. But he is ever certain of the fact that there is a right and a wrong, and of his obligation to follow the one to the rejection of the other; and he cannot put aside this conviction without ceasing to be human. The conviction too is *sui generis*. Any attempt to translate it into something else is sure to disfigure rather than to interpret. It is not, for example, another name for desire and aversion founded on contrasted experiences of the pleasurable and the painful. Doubtless there is an underlying faith in every healthy spirit that righteousness cannot be permanently divorced from blessedness, and an opposite conviction would tend to confusion and lassitude. But that by

no means involves the conclusion that a man's personal bearing toward right and wrong is simply his bearing toward that which is esteemed pleasurable or painful. It implies only that one outlook is more inspiring than another, more competent to beget a hearty appreciation of the constituted order of the universe, and so better suited to sustain a high sense of duty.[1] That men can put considerations of pleasure and pain very distinctly into the background, in abeyance to the sense of obligation, is too well attested by facts to yield to any eccentric theory of morals. To regard anticipated pleasure as the sole spring of action savors of intolerable cynicism in the face of the ample record of self-sacrifice, of deliberate choice of the harder among honorable ways of life for the sake of rendering a greater service, and of persevering devotement to the good of those affording little or no return of thankfulness and appreciation. The common judgment of men repudiates such cynicism, and human speech has embodied this judgment in the whole list of words which put righteous conviction and generous devotion in contrast with self-seeking. Both the facts of conduct and the facts of language emphasize the conclusion that a distinctive character belongs to the sense of obligation, and that it is armed with a mighty and sacred power.

The third element in conscience falls below neither of the others in its attestation of man's moral vocation. Whence comes this swift sentence which breaks through all sophistical excuses, and reveals a man to himself as condemned, as often

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[1] "It is not happiness in any banal sense that the ethical consciousness claims as the wages of well-doing. It sets up no demand that all its acts of self-restraint or self-sacrifice shall be recompensed by doles of happiness, — as if, says Spinoza, men expected to be decorated by God with high rewards for their virtue and their best actions, as for having endured the direst slavery. What the ethical consciousness does demand is rather to feel the universe behind it, to know that we are living in a moral cosmos, where our efforts avail somewhat, and where virtue may have the wages of going on and not to die." (Andrew Seth, Two Lectures on Theism, pp. 28, 29.)

as he does despite to any ethical principle which he recognizes when in a dispassionate frame of mind? It is the offspring of a nature that is intrinsically moral. It expresses the reaction of that nature against whatever does violence to its requirements. It is the constitutional in the individual opposing the element of personal caprice. And the length to which this reaction and opposition are often carried is of striking significance. Offense after offense is rebuked by a bitter sense of ill-desert. The moral nature thus interposes by virtue of its constitution a barrier against abuse. But as the body gradually loses its vitality and power of reaction against repeated abuse, so the moral constitution cannot be perpetually defied and ill-treated without incurring a fatal loss of vigor. The perverse habit of will and the corresponding desires and emotions grow dominant with continued indulgence, and leave little scope for the healthy emotions which spring up spontaneously in the unperverted nature.

In the light of the foregoing exposition we may determine in what sense the conscience can be called the voice of God. Clearly it is not such in a baldly literal sense. The elements of contingency which enter into it make this evident. Still it is no mistake to regard it as being in an important sense the bearer of a divine message. It profoundly emphasizes the truth that man is the subject of a moral order, and that this order, is too basal to rest in aught but the supreme reality — in God. In its normal development it brings man more and more toward the plane of the divine thought and feeling in respect of moral distinctions. From the standpoint of the Christian doctrine of grace, it may be regarded as touched and vitalized in all its elements by the Divine Spirit.

In the Scriptures the most explicit teaching on the general subject of the conscience is contained in Paul's Epistle to the Romans.[1] The apostle evidently conceived that the data of a

[1] Rom. i. 18–23, ii. 14–15.

true moral code are contained in the nature of man, and only need to be interpreted without passion and perversity to direct him Godward.

VI. — Freedom.

In proportion as the facts of conscience exhibit man as a responsible moral agent they attest his freedom. For freedom is an indispensable condition of responsible agency. And by freedom in this connection is understood preëminently a faculty of alternativity, a capability of varied choices or varied acts of self-determination under given conditions. To use the ordinary theological phrase, the power of *contrary choice* is a necessary endowment of man as a free responsible being. Something else may belong to the complete notion of freedom ; but this much comes inevitably to the front, as often as man is viewed in his responsibility, or as a subject of merit and demerit.

The proofs are very simple and intelligible. In the first place, it is the spontaneous impression of men that they have a veritable power of self-direction. Any man unembarrassed by the entanglements of speculation no more doubts his ability to vary his conduct in numerous details than he disbelieves in his own existence. Tell him that in all the different acts of his daily life he was invincibly determined, or could not have done differently under the given conditions, and out of the fullness of his honest conviction he will respond that he knows better.

In the second place it is the dictate of logic and common sense that a man cannot be counted responsible for a result when he has no power to vary his act. Responsibility belongs to an agent and not to an instrument. No one ever thinks of passing sentence on a knife or revolver as an accomplice in a homicide. Nor could he do so with any reason if the knife or revolver were supposed to be conscious, so long

as it should be regarded as devoid of all power of self-motion. Consciousness would be no more of an element in its responsibility than the quality of its metal, if in the crime it was simply and only an instrument. Now a man who is completely determined in his acts is an instrument, and not an agent proper. It makes no difference whether the efficient source of the determination is exterior or interior, so long as it is not freely posited by the person in question. If the nature bestowed upon him determines him to a particular act, excluding every alternative, then he is not the agent in that act. He is a mere instrument, the real agent being the bestower of his nature. To charge responsibility upon the person thus determined would involve precisely the same absurdity as to make the knife or revolver a guilty accomplice in a homicide, or to condemn a clock for striking at a point where its dynamics exclude every other alternative.

In the third place, the facts of deliberation speak for the reality of freedom as defined. To defer the decision on a special point for the sake of further reflection is to make a preliminary decision. Just so long as the case is purposely kept open there is a choice against precipitating the ultimate choice. Now what is to be said of these intermediate choices, this balancing of reasons, this suspending of a decision of the main question? On the necessitarian theory, every step is strictly determined, and the whole process of deliberation becomes an illusion. It is not a name for self-directed reflection, but for certain determined motions viewed as antecedent to another and more conspicuous determined motion. The automaton indulges in some whirring and rattling before it executes its proper feat.

Once more, freedom in the sense of alternativity is a needed postulate in justifying the distinction between truth and error. It was noticed, in criticism of materialism and pantheism,[1]

[1] Part I. Chap. II. Sect. V., VI.

that the thoroughgoing determinism, which pertains to either of these systems, undermines the idea that there is any valid standard of truth. A like result can be charged against any comprehensive scheme of determinism. Unless there is real contingency in the universe, one set of judgments or opinions is just as much the outcome of the nature of things as another. Nothing being properly referable to the personal autonomy of the creature — to his caprice, his unethical haste, his self-induced blindness — all his errors must be regarded as founded in the will or character of the First Great Cause. But to impute contradictions in thought to the same source is to cancel the ground of intellectual confidence in that source.

The most that determinism has to say against the conception which these arguments sustain may be embraced in two or three specifications. It is alleged, in the first place, that freedom, in the sense of a power of contrary choice, is contradictory to the principle of causality. If in the presence of two or more alternatives the human agent can select one as well as another, then there is no cause for his choice; an event transpires when he chooses, which is without a cause. The trouble with this argument is that it ignores the distinction between an agent and an intermediate or instrumental cause, and so rules out the idea of creation in favor of an all-embracing, necessitated evolution. If the principle of causality excludes veritable option between alternatives, then God never exercised any option, creation proper cannot be imputed to Him, and a perfectly inexorable law of necessary evolution governs every divine purpose and every putting forth of divine energy. On the other hand, if there is option with God, if the making of the world was not simply a necessitated evolution of His power, then the principle of causality does not, as a matter of fact, exclude the power of contrary choice. Existing in the Supreme Being, the like power may conceivably exist in other beings. Man may share with his Maker the prerogative of creating out of nothing, originating, not indeed

objective beings, but subjective determinations. As Ulrici says: "Every pure self-movement is at bottom a creating out of nothing."[1] This representation does not invalidate the principle of causality, but limits it as it must be limited in view of the intrinsic prerogatives of free personality. A free personality is not merely an intermediate cause, or medium of transmitting efficiency. It has in itself the unique power of absolute origination. Unlike anything in the sphere of impersonal nature, it is a true agent, capable of acting beyond the measure in which it is acted upon. In virtue of its power of absolute origination it is a pluri-potential cause, or capable of varying its action under given conditions.[2]

The creative function, or power of absolute origination, as just predicated of free personality, gives the needed answer to the Edwardean puzzle. In repudiating the self-determination of the will, Edwards argued, if the will freely determines itself to a particular act, it must be by a choice. But this choice is an act, and the self-determination of the will to this act must also be by a choice, and so on to infinity. This argument assumes that a volition must have a determining antecedent which is either voluntary or involuntary. It thus puts out of sight the creative function inherent in free personality. For an act of creation or absolute origination no determining antecedents, whether voluntary or involuntary, are to be imagined. To suppose such is to throw back the idea of creation or to rule it out altogether. Of course free personality may deter-

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[1] Gott und die Natur, p. 626.

[2] Mystery doubtless attaches to a power of this kind; but the free will must be taken to be what the total facts of man's nature and experience demand. Only mischief and confusion result when the attempt is made to force it under a foreign category and to exact an impossible explanation. "Every determination of a free will must," says Lotze, "as respects its origin, be inexplicable, for to explain means nothing else than to show that a particular event follows from its antecedents in accordance with universal laws. The incomprehensibility of the free determination is therefore no obstacle to accepting it, but a consequence of its proper idea." (Grundzüge der praktischen Philosophie 2te aufl. p. 29.)

mine in the light of reasons, but that is quite different from being strictly determined.

The last remark brings us to another argument of the determinist or necessitarian. Unless the acts of a person, he urges, are determined by his reason and his feelings they are irrational and characterless. To this it is to be replied that it is utterly impossible to establish for every act the probability of a distinct motive, whether in the reason or the feelings. On the contrary, a large number of acts have the appearance of falling under the category of the purely arbitrary. A person determines, for example, to take a walk for the sake of exercise. This is his sole conscious motive. Now the exercise will be equally gained in walking in any one of a number of directions. Will it be impossible for him to move his limbs unless he discovers a motive for preferring one of the several directions? The common sense and the consciousness of men repudiate the notion, and assert a power of arbitrary choice in such a case, and in a thousand kindred ones. There being then a power of arbitrary choice, the only question concerns its scope. It is indeed easy to say that it is confined entirely to trivial matters, and so deserves no serious account. But a judicial mind will hesitate to slur over the element of arbitrariness in this way, and for two reasons. In the first place great moral transitions are sometimes rapidly consummated. There seems to be such a thing as a baleful freak, a sudden plunge from the good into the evil, a choice of a sane subject which yet is so contradictory of his foregoing record as to look like suicidal madness. In the second place, and more especially, it is to be noted that a slight turn in a moral career may be of great ultimate significance. Suppose that a man is not likely to act in revolutionary contrast with his character or his habitual ways of thought and feeling; if there is in his will-power a certain margin of arbitrariness, this may be used as an entering wedge to initiate a change of moral course. It may place

him to-morrow in a somewhat better or a somewhat worse position than that which he occupies to-day. By advance in the one or the other direction he may meet allies of the good or the evil in his character, which shall help to still further divergence from his original status. Thus transitions are seen to be provided for, though a large scope be allowed to the conditioning force of character, or the motives which spring out of inward states. On the supposition of a margin of arbitrariness, both the constant, or relatively constant, and the variable in moral experience are explained. The one is due to the conditioning force of the antecedent character or states of feeling. The other is due to the fact that this conditioning force is not absolute, but is qualified by a margin of arbitrariness. The union of the two accounts far better for the actual phenomena of conduct, to say nothing about securing an intelligible basis of responsibility, than does the opposing theory of a strict determining force in the antecedent dispositions or states of mind. While the average moral career may indicate that the will is likely to follow the direction of the character, it indicates also that the will has power, within limits, to modify character by making alliance with the better or the worse among the mixed impulses which pertain to all men in their formative stage. It should be noticed also, that to condition conduct absolutely on antecedent character embarrasses the conception of the possibility of the apostasy of a holy being. Determinists confront here a fact which contradicts their premises, unless perchance they have the hardihood to affirm that the divine will, as a more efficient source of determination than any finite character, was back of the primal apostasy.

In sustaining his case the determinist has of course to make a show of securing responsibility. And this he achieves by the dogmatic assertion that a man is responsible for his character and everything which it dictates, apart from all question of its origin. This was the ground taken by

Jonathan Edwards. Charles Hodge has repeated it in the most unqualified form. He denies that a man can be held responsible only for his voluntary acts and their subjective effects. "The moral character of dispositions or habits," he says, "depends on their nature and not on their origin. . . . Whether concreated, innate, infused or self-acquired, they are good or bad according to their nature."[1] This maxim, he thinks, is in accord with the universal judgment of men. But is it not rather in unmistakable opposition to the dictates of sober and judicial reflection? Doubtless there is a general tendency to judge men according to their actual dispositions. For example, when we see a man under an over-mastering passion for strong drink we are likely to believe that, to a greater or less extent, he has invited the encroachments of the enslaving appetite through lack of such resistance as he might have summoned forth, or through an indulgence which he might have avoided. If the contrary could be proved, if it could be shown that the appetite in all its strength and all the completeness of its mastery was purely a matter of inheritance, it would be a sin against reason and charity to charge it against its subject as a ground of moral reprobation. No unbiased jury in the world would hold a man blameworthy for that in which it is certain that he had no more choice than in the natural color of his hair. It is only by reason of the equivocal sense in which the terms good and bad can be used that the bald statement of Hodge has any shade of plausibility. The terms have one meaning in æsthetic judgments and another in proper moral judgments. The ferocious disposition of a wild beast may be æsthetically unpleasing, but we have yet to learn that it renders the beast morally reprehensible. So a man dominated by a ferocious disposition, which in its full extent was concreated or infused, would be æsthetically unpleasing, and

[1] Systematic Theology, Pt. II. Chap. V. §6.

society, in the interest of its own safety, might be authorized to put him under restraint; but to sentence him as morally blameworthy would be a cruel injustice. It may be said indeed that a man stands on a different footing from that of a beast because of the attribute of reason. But what element of responsibility can come from a faculty of reason which is under the complete determination of a concreated disposition, and has no means of escaping that determination? Reason can make no difference in responsibility, save as it is joined with a veritable power of self-direction. As wholly subservient to a concreated disposition, it would be rather an instrument of the Creator than a factor in a true agent.

Thus far we have considered freedom as a condition of responsible agency. In this sense it involves the power of contrary choice, and is often described as *formal freedom*. But freedom may be regarded from another point of view. It may be taken as significant of untrammeled life in the spirit, the relative exemption from barriers which belongs to him whose will is fused into oneness with the divine will. Viewed in this light it has been termed *real freedom*. Naturally the Bible, as the book of salvation, has quite as much to say about freedom in the latter sense as in the former. Indeed, more explicit references to real freedom can be cited than to formal. But the latter enters into the groundwork of the biblical system of thought, being assumed where it is not definitely asserted.[1]

The conception of real freedom emphasizes the truth that the rebellious soul is certain to be balked in its ambitions and cramped in its life, that there is no getting rid of such tremendous facts as God and His moral order, and that the soul must

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[1] Gen. ii., iii.; Deut. xxx. 15, 16; Matt. vii. 7, 8, xi. 12, xxiii. 37; Luke xi. 5-13, John v. 40, vi. 68; Acts vii. 51; 1 Cor. x. 12; Heb. iii. 8. The principle of real freedom is contained in the following passages: Matt. vii. 17-20, xii. 33: John viii. 32. 36; Gal. vi. 7, 8; James i. 25, ii. 12; 1 John iii. 9; Prov. v. 22; Isa. lvii. 20, 21.

be adjusted to these facts if it is to gain the pathway of a blessed and unhindered progress. It assures us that the more perfect is a man's love of the true and the exalted, the greater his delight in holiness, the more readily and intelligently he can despise all that sin has to offer, the further has he escaped from all liability to bonds and shackles.

In their mutual relations formal freedom is to be deemed the prius of real freedom. The power of choice is given to man that he may use it to make or to confirm his character. If in the ultimate result of his choices character gains fixity, or powerfully conditions the determinations of the will, this is what he himself has elected and helped to work out. It continues, therefore, to stand to his credit or discredit, and does not cancel his position as a responsible agent.

That *great* fixity of character may be achieved is not to be questioned. But it is not so clear that there is a philosophical warrant for assuming that *absolute* fixity may be gained by a creature. Immutability is a divine name. Anything less than absolute holiness and wisdom seems to make something less than an absolute barrier against a sinful choice. Still, by continued advance in holiness and intelligence, a finite spirit may evidently gain such an immense height above the solicitations and impulses of sin, that a descent to their level becomes practically incredible. That a corresponding fixity in unholiness may be reached will not be doubted by one who duly weighs the force of the downward gravitation which is the most terrible factor in the punishment of sin.

The essentials in a definition of freedom have been given in the above discussion. But a word may be added in the interest of a clear conception of the relation of freedom to power or ability. In the sense in which it has been used, it manifestly is closely associated with the idea of power. It is descriptive of man as a true agent, in opposition to writing him down as a mere instrument. But a true agent is a power, a source of efficiency, a veritable cause. In describing such

an agent, therefore, freedom expresses not merely the negative notion of exemption from one thing or another, but the positive notion of power, and above all the power of self-determination or self-direction.

We have spoken rather of the freedom of *man*, taken in the character which belongs to him as a responsible agent, than of the freedom of the *will*. There is, however, no objection to the latter phrase, so long as a separation in man's indivisible psychical nature is not imagined, and the will is regarded as simply a name for the soul in a particular order of power and function.

VII. — Original Righteousness.

While freedom imports that man must be a real factor in making or confirming his character, it by no means implies that elements of character may not be given him in his original outfit. All that has been urged in favor of referring the facts of conscience to constitutional endowments is just so much evidence of an incipient moral character by the gift of creation. In like manner, as has been argued,[1] the facts of religion imply that the specifically religious element in man — his bent to recognize the supernatural as something upon which he depends fundamentally — is his constitutionally, or by gift of creation. This conclusion harmonizes with the strength and universality of the religious sentiment, and is certainly quite as conceivable as the fact of regeneration. If the operation of divine grace can displace an existing bent in a man by a new tendency, there is very little reason to doubt that creative efficiency can plant in man's nature, at the outset, specific tendencies of a moral and religious kind.

The sum of these tendencies, thus conceived as given in

[1] Part I. Chap. II. Sect. VII.

creation, is theologically described as *original righteousness.* In the thought of the scholastics, original righteousness, or its more eminent part, the disposition to recognize and love God, was construed as something given apart from and subsequent to creation. This doctrine of a *donum superadditum* was properly repudiated by the Reformers as making what belongs to the very idea of the normal man a supplement or attachment.

Though the conception of original righteousness is a valid one, it needs to be guarded against exaggeration. The germ is not to be magnified to the proportions which belong to the mature development. From the days of Augustine a description of the unfallen Adam has been largely current, in which he is represented as possessed of the most princely attributes of wisdom and positive holiness.[1] Such a picture was formed wholly from the colors of the speculative imagination. No biblical foundation for it can be discovered. Genesis sketches an innocent man, but not by any means a prince in knowledge or righteousness. Nowhere in the subsequent books is Adam held up as a model toward which human aspiration should reach. In no degree is he made to rival the function of Christ in this respect. Paul, on the contrary, seems to have conceived that the Adam, who had not yet firmly established the supremacy of the spirit over the sensuous life, stood on an essentially lower plane than that of Christ, so that the latter is taken in opposition to the former as the type of the spiritual man.[2]

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[1] Dr. South's declaration that "Adam came into the world a philosopher," and that "Aristotle was only the rubbish of an Adam," is but the more rhetorical expression of an opinion that many distinguished theologians have entertained.

[2] 1 Cor. xv. 45, 46.

VIII. — Grounds of the Possibility of Apostasy.

The conception of original righteousness, as involving only initial or immature character, and the conception of freedom, as implying a margin of arbitrariness, together furnish such explanation as can be offered of the fact of apostasy. Of course where arbitrariness is in any degree a real factor, a specific explanation of any particular act, or the rendering of a definite and complete account of its genesis, is not possible. To explain in this sense a deed of sin is to explain it away, inasmuch as the explanation is compassed by bringing the deed under the category of a necessary causation, and that which springs necessarily from its antecedents has not the proper character of sin, at least where there was no option as to the antecedents. In other words, all sin which is properly chargeable as such has an element of caprice, and a specific explanation of this or that instance of caprice is plainly out of question. This leaves us with the conclusion that in regard to the explanation of the entrance of sin only general grounds of its possibility can be stated. From this point of view we may see how much can properly be conceded to various theories that have been broached.

The Leibnitzian theory, which refers sin to creaturely limitations, contains doubtless an element of truth. A limited inexperienced being has, in himself, no perfect safeguard against moral lapse. The end which in an adequate outlook appears as one and indivisible is liable to be broken up in his apprehension. In dwelling upon blessedness he may lose sight in some measure of its necessary foundation in goodness, and thus an inordinate attention to that which is perfectly legitimate may become to him a source of temptation. He is also subject to surprises. A new turn in experience is likely to awaken a vivid emotion, and this to impel to action before the dissuasives, which would be apparent to a larger and quicker intelligence, have come to view. In a word, the fragmentary contemplation

of reality incidental to a limited being gives scope to a one-sided pressure of motives, and so generates a liability to swerve from the normal course. It is to be noted, however, that it is nothing more than the *liability* to a trespass that is accounted for in this way. The doctrine of creaturely limitations is pushed entirely beyond its legitimate domain when it is supposed to account for the fact of sin, and not merely to assist the conception of its possibility. Limitations afford a positive explanation of the fact of sin only as they contain a ground of its necessity; but, as has been said, strict necessity which was not created in the use of personal autonomy cancels the notion of sin. Moreover, if creaturely limitations of themselves necessitate the fact of sin, it must be concluded that continuous adherence to righteousness is out of question for a finite agent.

The same order of remarks applies to the theory which explains sin by reference to man's sensuous nature. No one can deny that the cravings which spring out of bodily necessities, and the manifold impressions from the outer world of which the body is the medium, are powerful factors in shaping thought and volition. Their opportunity, too, for mastery is much enhanced by their presence at the very beginning of the development of the individual. Before the intellect has made any noticeable progress, or any habit of conscious self-control has been formed, the bodily needs and impressions operate with a domineering and ceaseless energy. Thus the rational nature is put at a disadvantage over against the animal propensities. It must meet a pressure from the side of the bodily life that easily becomes an occasion of perverse indulgence. But, on the other hand, it speaks for a possible sovereignty of the rational nature, that mature life exhibits numerous instances both of a better and of a worse control of appetite than is in general characteristic of childhood. This fact as much as testifies that a power of self-education as well as the pressure of the sensuous nature, is often back

of sin. There is also a strong objection to the theory of the sensuous origin of sin in the fact that various kinds of sinful dispositions, such as pride, envy, and selfish ambition, have no perceptible connection with the sensuous nature, and can just as well be thought to pertain to unembodied spirits as to composite beings like men. Still further, it is to be observed that an overplus of the sensuous nature reduces, on examination, to a deficit of the spirit. Since the body has no power of self-motion, to predicate an overplus of the bodily propensities is just the same as affirming that the spirit is not so well furnished in its higher faculties as to be qualified for efficient rule over the impulses which belong to it through connection with the body. The theory under review, therefore, comes back to the principle of the foregoing, and explains sin on the ground of creaturely limitations, its distinctive feature being that it emphasizes a limitation or deficit in the moral subject over against the sensuous nature. Of course, like the more general theory of which it is a variety, it explains rather the liability to sin than any specific act of sin.

These are the principal theories of which account needs to be taken. The attempt to found sin in the divine ordering is a melancholy aberration that deserves mention only for the sake of repudiation. To place the will of God back of sin is either to deny its sinfulness or to impeach the ethical nature of God. It also abases revelation to an instrumentality of the pedagogics of deceit. If sin was part and parcel of the world-scheme as planned and ordered in the mind of God, then the Scriptures, in thundering against it and portraying it as the abhorrent enemy of God and spoiler of men, fulfill an insincere and theatrical rôle.[1] The conclusion must be that in God's sight sin is really useful, but that it is important to have men

[1] The general attitude of the Scriptures toward sin is plainly one of deep hostility. It must be admitted, however, that Rom. xi. 32, judged by verbal appearance, might not suggest such an attitude. But it is to be noticed that the apostle here was contemplating men who *as respects interior character were already*

think in all practical moods entirely otherwise. They must, forsooth, get into an unbiblical and speculative frame of mind before it will answer for them to have insight into the actual fact. Theistic writers who have gotten into this frame have taken one of two lines in their exposition of God's design in connection with sin. Some, making the manifestation of the divine character the ruling interest, have argued that sin was decreed in order that love and justice might be displayed in opposite ways of dealing with the undeserving. This argument has claimed the suffrage of some eminent representatives of theology in the Reformed Church; but it is impossible to concede to it any virtue. On its basis neither love nor justice can properly be regarded as coming to manifestation; both are put out of sight in favor of arbitrary will. A being who turns the universe into a showcase, and elects men, independently of their deserts, to infinitely contrasted destinies, is, in essence, arbitrary will, and neither love nor justice. Others, making human development the ruling interest, have advocated the more plausible theory that an experience of sin is a necessary incident in man's training, and on this account has a certain place in God's design. There is no strength or fullness of life, it is contended, apart from an experience of contrasts. A man must make his way through the antithesis of good and evil in order truly and deeply to know either the one or the other, and without this knowledge he lacks energy as being destitute of the most powerful moral incentives. It is true that sin may pass to that excess which is harmful to the individual; but even in such a case there is a compensation, partly in the warning example which is given, and partly in the effort and struggle which are devolved upon society for

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sinners. In his view it was expedient that such should be met by commands and prohibitions, which, as challenging their real bent, would naturally provoke to transgressions or, in a manner, shut them up to disobedience. Only thus would they be likely to come to the self-knowledge necessary to humble them and make them fit to receive the divine mercy.

the elimination or correction of what it regards as an evil. Serving thus as a necessary, though often a bitter tonic, sin, as a temporary experience of moral agents in process of training, may be regarded as an instrument of divine tuition. So the apology runs. Satan could hardly be interested to invent a more clever argument for the promotion of his special enterprise. Still, it is not clever enough to be impervious to criticism. It affronts the moral sense, which knows sin as that which does not admit of apology. It puts God in the odious light of taking evil into His plan for the sake of good, whereas the ordinary ethical code of men condemns those who do evil that good may come. It is guilty of exaggerated stress upon the developing power of sinful experience, and overlooks the blighting, maiming, enslaving tendencies of that experience. The example of Christ ought to teach us that one can grow to manly stature without the help of an experience of sin. Moral growth may indeed be forwarded by effort; but the effort is fruitful in proportion as it takes the normal course and works out obedience to the moral standard. He who steadily holds himself true to that standard advances in moral strength and grows toward the likeness of God's immutable goodness. Defection from the standard insinuates, on the contrary, an element of weakness and paralysis into the moral nature as respects its nobler capabilities. Not an experience of sin, but an experience of unceasing vigilance against it, and of unceasing devotion to its opposite, is what a moral agent needs for his development. The most that can be said in behalf of sin as a means of development lies in the fact that to a certain extent one form of sin may be used to antagonize another. For example, when a man's interior defection from righteousness is covered up by pride and self-conceit some specific transgression may bring humiliation and consciousness of existing depravity. Sin may thus in a measure counteract sin. But, as opposed to holy obedience, sin is ever harm and waste. If it be said

that but for sin there would have been no cross of an atoning Saviour, it must be answered that the race ought to be ashamed to all eternity for having made the cross necessary by its miserable apostasy. The love which came to expression in the cross was always in God, and moral beings by keeping to the pathway of a perfect righteousness would have advanced swiftly to a perception of its infinite depth and tenderness without the aid of the actual cross. To suppose otherwise is to discredit the gospel principle that heart purity is a means of spiritual vision.

In closing the paragraph a word may be awarded to one or two side questions respecting the nature of sin. A point that has given rise to much discussion concerns the propriety of defining sin as negation or privation. Origen, many of the fathers, and the scholastics generally were in favor of this definition, conceiving that, like darkness and cold, sin is essentially a lack rather than anything positive. Of course, as opposed to substance, sin is but accident. It ranks as an accidental property of a free moral agent, being predicable not only of his perverse acts but also of their subjective effects in his nature. But it is not so clear that it can properly be described as mere privation. So far from suggesting that it springs universally from lassitude of spirit, it is often associated with a powerful self-assertion. A frightful energy in wickedness is something which history teaches us to rate among possibilities. In every such case sin does not appear as a mere lack of a holy will, or a relaxing of the hold upon the good; it appears rather as a full-orbed will-power wrongly directed, and so includes a positive aspect.

Another question concerns the warrant for regarding selfishness the ruling principle in all sin. Not a little can be said for the affirmative. The Scriptures sum up all obligation in the law of love.[1] But selfishness, or a perverse self-assertion,

[1] Matt. xxii. 37–40; Rom. xiii. 10; 1 Cor. xiii.

is the opposite of love. It would seem, therefore, that all violations of obligation have at their core the principle of selfishness. Observation, however, assures us that instances of idolatrous devotion, or great self-abandon in behalf of another, are possible, and that the very greatness of the self-abandon may seem to be an occasion of a trespass in the form of neglect of divine claims. It may be noticed also that it seems to be possible to trespass against an obligation of rational self-love by an undue despair and precipitate casting away of self. In either of these instances it may be possible to detect an element of self-assertion. But in connection with either instance likewise the question may be raised whether the ruling temper corresponds to what, in a customary use of words, is designated selfishness. In order to be certain of keeping within the warrant of facts, we will content ourselves with saying that selfishness is the dominant disposition in sinful natures and a preëminently inclusive aspect of sins generally.

IX. — Biblical and Rational Data as to Man's Condition by Birth, or the Question of Original Sin.

One familiar with the theological teaching of the centuries, with its confident and explicit indoctrination on original sin, or the Adamic connections of human sinfulness, is naturally surprised when he turns to the Bible to find it well-nigh silent on this theme. In the Old Testament it is not awarded a single direct word. Only one New Testament writer makes specific mention of it, and that in the course of historical parallels where the line cannot be regarded as sharply drawn between literal fact and admissible symbolism. In neither Testament is there any approach to the assertion that the moral state of the race was so conditioned upon the conduct of Adam that if he had continued obedient to the divine command the race would infallibly have persisted in holiness. This

is a monstrous imagination which limits the notion of probation to Adam alone, if it does not cancel it entirely, and throws the whole responsibility for the occurrence of sin upon the will of God. For if God could have kept every one of Adam's posterity from falling, then we are obliged to conclude that he could just as well as not have kept Adam from falling, and the fact of his transgression is clear proof that God was well pleased to have him transgress. But this conclusion makes a mock of sin, since it is perfectly manifest that what pleases God ought not to make anyone sorry, or else that it is obligatory to regard the divine pleasure a subordinate interest.

Indirectly the Scriptures may be regarded as making considerable account of Adam's trespass in its race connections. In the first place they strongly and repeatedly emphasize the fact of human sinfulness.[1] Then again they place no little stress upon the continuity of human sinfulness, or its transmission through natural descent.[2] In the light of these two representations it logically follows that from the scriptural standpoint a serious import pertains to Adam's trespass. It may not have been so destructive to Adam or to his posterity as theology has often pictured, but it had a great and somber significance as beginning the work of destruction. As an evil beginning, it initiated the depravation of the race, and so may properly be put in antithesis, as it is by Paul, to that glorious beginning of regenerate life which was consummated by the coming of Christ into the organism of humanity.

This is the sum of scriptural teaching on the subject of original sin ; that is, the first trespass stands out as initiating the moral depravation which is a general characteristic of the race. It of course brought condemnation upon the person of the transgressor ; but the Scriptures nowhere explicitly assert

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[1] Gen. vi. 5, 11–13, viii. 21; 1 Kings viii. 46; Job iv. 17–19, xiv. 4, xv. 14–16, xxv. 5, 6; Ps. xiv. 1–3, liii. 1–3, lviii. 1–3, cxliii. 2; Prov. xx. 9; Eccl. vii. 20; Isa. lxiv. 6; Rom. iii. 9–12. 23, v. 12; Gal. iii. 22; Eph. ii. 3.

[2] Job xiv. 4; Ps. li. 5; John iii. 6; Eph. ii. 3.

that this condemnation was at the same time that of the race, and in a fair construction they cannot be regarded as implying that it was. The most that can be alleged to the contrary from the Old Testament is the list of instances in which the later generations are seemingly held accountable for the sins of the earlier.[1] It has been supposed by some scholars that in these instances there is generally the tacit assumption that the sins of the earlier generations are quite certain to be imitated by those immediately succeeding, so that the divine visitation, in reaching to the third or fourth generation, does not outrun the fact of sin. Moreover, in interpreting biblical language reference can be made to the distinction between inheriting the consequences of sinful acts and being held morally blameworthy for the acts. But, for the present purpose, it is not necessary to insist upon these explanations. We may content ourselves with the truth that if the Old Testament admits an extension of condemnation beyond the proper transgressors, and implicates their descendants in their guilt, this is a way of thinking which the Old Testament itself, in the best range of its teaching, transcends and repudiates in clear and emphatic terms.[2]

As for the New Testament, only two or three Pauline passages come into the account, as having any real appearance of making the race sharers in the guilt or condemnation of Adam's sin. Of these the most important is Rom. v. 12–21. The apostle here draws a comparison between the evil potency in the sinning Adam and the beneficent or saving potency in the righteous Christ. As the one reached beyond all national bounds, and affected the lot of the race as a whole, so the other, which serves as an offset, is intrinsically adapted to be at least of as far-reaching effect. Both are pictured rather

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[1] Ex. xx. 5, xxxiv. 7; Lev. xxvi. 39; Num. xiv. 18; Deut. v. 9; 2 Sam. xxi. 1–9; Ps. cix. 14; Isa. xiv. 21, lxv. 6, 7; Jer. xxxii. 18; Lam. v. 7; Hos. iv. 6.

[2] Deut. xxiv. 16; 2 Kings xiv. 6; Prov. ix. 12; Jer. xxxi. 29, 30; Ezek. xviii., xxxiii. 10–20.

according to their tendency than according to literal fact. Surely the potency of grace in Christ does not actually come upon all men unto justification of life, but it tends to that end, and hence is so described. In like manner the evil potency in the sinning Adam is characterized according to its tendency. In strictness it was only an initial cause of the depravation of the race; but as a corrupt disposition is a standing occasion of sin, the primary source of the corruption — the trespass of Adam — is graphically described as making men sinners, or as involving all in sin. This is bold language, to affirm the fact where only the potency comes into account which tends to the realization of the fact; but it is not discordant with Paul's usage. He represents, for example, believers as having died with Christ, or as having been crucified with Him.[1] Why? Simply because the death of Christ had in itself a potency for extirpating or crucifying the old man with his carnal and sinful disposition. So in like manner as regards the sin of Adam. Men did not actually sin in his sin, or become sinners through him without an exercise in detail of personal agency, any more than they were actually crucified with Christ. Why should a prosaic and rigorous construction be demanded in the one instance and be excluded in the other? In either case, and no less in the one than in the other, it is reasonable to take the words of the apostle as religious oratory, in whose vivid strain the tendency is treated as substantially identical with the fact toward which it tends.[2]

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[1] 2 Cor. v. 14; Rom. vi. 6; Gal. ii. 20.

[2] That Paul could not have meant that the race literally shared in Adam's sin is seen in the representation of verse 14 that a part of mankind did not sin after the similitude of Adam's transgression. These were indeed sinners, in Paul's view, as violating the dictates of conscience. But the fact that they were not regarded as sinners in the sense of Adam, who transgressed a positive precept, implies that his sin was not viewed as actually theirs. With the above interpretation the following from Professor George B. Stevens may be compared: "In what sense, according to Paul's characteristic modes of thought, does he mean that all men sinned when Adam sinned? They sinned in the same sense in which believers

The verses under consideration agree with 1 Cor. xv. 21, 22, in pointing to the sinning Adam as the source of physical death. As visited on him death was a token of condemnation. But it is entirely arbitrary to attach the same meaning to it universally. Two distinct offices may be fulfilled by death, namely, that of punishment and that of discipline. Apart from the ends of mere punishment, a race, which had become heir to evil tendencies and needed to be held back from excess of wickedness, might conceivably be subjected to the restricting and disciplining influence of mortality. Even if the discipline were not needed by every member of the race, or should not be utilized upon all, still it might be required by the race as a whole, so that it could not well be omitted if God were to have a general plan of administration. Accordingly, the general reign of death is accounted for by the exigency growing out of the general fact of human sinfulness. As the sinful tendency ordinarily issues into actual transgressions, death falls ordinarily upon those who have incurred guilt. In a rapid view, therefore, such as is taken by the apostle, the dispensation of death may be associated with a state of condemnation. But in a closer discrimination it must be granted that the association has only a relative propriety, or that the fact of death is no certain proof that condemnation ever attached to its subject in the sight of God. Standing in the race, the individual has to submit to the physical lot which the divine wisdom has thought fit to appoint to the race as a whole. His death does not necessarily witness to his personal demerit, any more than a visitation of famine or plague neces-

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were crucified to the world and died unto sin when Christ died upon the cross. The believer's renewal is conceived as wrought in advance by those acts and experiences of Christ in which it has its ground. As the consequences of His vicarious sufferings are traced back to their cause, so are the consequences which flowed from the beginning of sin in Adam traced back to that original fount of evil and identified with it; but the latter statement should no more be treated as a rigid logical formula than the former, its counterpart." (Pauline Theology, pp. 135, 136.)

sarily shows a whole community to be deserving of an extraordinary punishment.

If the passage in the fifth chapter of Romans is not to be regarded as teaching the condemnation of all men on the simple ground of Adam's sin, no more can such a tenet be found in Eph. ii. 3. The context of the clause, "by nature children of wrath," emphasizes the force of ungodliness in both Jews and Gentiles. There is nothing in the connection to hint that the sin of Adam was in the thought of the apostle. As little is there any indication that he was thinking of the state of new-born infants. It is the ingrained sinfulness of contemporary men, manifested in the fulfillment of fleshly desires, upon which he is dwelling. Surveying this rank of conscious accountable transgressors, and viewing them as living out a characteristic tendency or disposition, Paul speaks of them as by nature children of wrath. Would the apostle, apart from the assumed fact of a personal appropriation and living out of abnormal tendencies, have regarded any of this group as actually subjects of God's wrath? We believe it rash to assume that he would. He has nowhere described little children as under the wrath of God. It is to be noticed, moreover, that Paul has given us a hint that the term φύσει, "by nature," is not necessarily to be understood of a condition resulting simply from birth. In Rom. ii. 14 he speaks of the Gentiles as doing "by nature" the things of the law. Now, evidently he did not mean that they were born doers of the law, but only that they were born with a nature adapted to provide in due time for a sense of moral obligations. In like manner the phrase in Ephesians may reasonably be taken as meaning, not that men are born children of wrath, but only that by birth they have a nature which tends to such personal choice and conduct as invite the divine displeasure. In any case, if we bring the New Testament into view, the scene of Christ blessing little children, and declaring that "of such is the kingdom of heaven," must be regarded quite as truly indica-

tive of their standing before God as a brief phrase in an epistle, in which there is no specific mention of children and no certain reference to their standing.

If we pass from scriptural to rational data, there are overwhelming reasons for excluding the element of guilt from original sin, or man's condition by birth. No subtle disquisition can ever silence the verdict of common sense that it is impossible to hold a man responsible for a deed that was committed before his birth. Only a moral person, actually existing, can commit a deed of which either merit or demerit can be predicated. Mere potential existence is no basis for responsibility. If the race existed potentially in Adam, both Adam and the race existed potentially in God from all eternity. Shall divine deeds be put to the account of the race because of its potential existence in God? As well do this as to charge the deeds of Adam to his posterity because of its potential existence in him.

Among the different theories which make Adam's trespass a matter of guilt or condemnation to the race, there is not one that can endure rational inspection. Excluding composite theories, we have the realistic theory, the theory of immediate imputation, and the theory of mediate imputation.

The realistic theory supposes the species to exist prior to the individuals. A prominent advocate defines an individual as "a fractional part of human nature separated from the common mass."[1] As the undivided mass was in Adam, all men were substantially in him, and so wrought together in his trespass. In the opinion of its upholders this view has the advantage of escaping the obnoxious element of an arbitrary imputation. But, were the theory metaphysically tenable, it would still be censurable as involving this very element. On the realistic hypothesis an individual of the present was indeed really in Adam; but just as really he was in his

[1] Shedd, Dogmatic Theology, II. 72.

immediate progenitor, as also in the whole direct line of his ancestors. How comes it then that he shared only in the guilt of an act committed by the remotest ancestor? If real existence in Adam explains his responsible share in the first trespass, then real existence in all the intermediate ancestors necessitates a responsible share in their trespasses. In fine, the realist can make no use of his realism in explanation of his doctrine of original sin, without an assumption, explicit or implicit, of a perfectly arbitrary decree separating the sin of Adam from all other ancestral sins and charging it alone upon the race, unless, forsooth, he appeals to the high-flying and grotesque conceit that Adam remains in perpetuity the distributor of souls, each man receiving human nature directly from him. Even in face of this conceit the question could be raised why, if Adam repented and was forgiven — as very likely was the case — the race preëxisting in him is not to be viewed as having shared in these experiences, so as no longer to bear the guilt of the first trespass. The realistic theory is thus without any special theological advantage to compensate for its metaphysical shortcomings. And these are not slight. How does it harmonize with the conception of a spiritual entity that it should be severed into fractional parts? Is not division for such an entity equivalent to annihilation? Truly if human nature can be parcelled out as this theory supposes, it must be composed of separable molecules or atoms, and belongs under the category of material stuffs. Then, too, a question may be raised as to the unequivocal title of any particular individual to the share of human nature which he is supposed to possess. This was once a part of the being of Adam, and also of the intermediate ancestors. When did Adam and the line of his successors suffer diminution by the separation? Or if separation from the pre-existent mass caused no diminution, how is the idea of a finite entity which suffers no diminution by subdivision to be construed?

If the realist, instead of resorting to the theory just sketched, prefers to assume that human nature is an indivisible reality, then his postulate brings him face to face with a very serious problem as to the possible multipresence of a finite entity—its simultaneous existence whole and entire in any number of subjects. Nor is this all. He needs to grapple with the question whether distinctions of personality amount to anything more than diversities in accidental properties. If human nature taken as a real entity, one and self-identical, is in every man, then it would seem to follow that any given individual of the human race is, in the whole foundation and core of his being, identical with any other individual, and is distinguished from the same only superficially. Now, such a flattening down of the significance of personality is something which a sober philosophy cannot regard favorably. It is the presupposition of all earnest thinking of a theistic and christian order that distinctions of personality are the most fundamental in the world. Men may be said to have a common nature in the sense that they are resembling personalities. To affirm that in the fundament and core of their being they are all one and the same entity, styled human nature, is to deny to them the proper uniqueness and significance of distinct personalities.

Enough has been said to indicate that the realistic theory makes rather than solves difficulties. A just verdict will rate it with obsolete scholastic trumpery as ignoring the wide distinction between concrete realities and empty abstractions. To treat, as it does, an unreal abstract entity, styled human nature, as though it were identical with myriads of actual moral persons, is arbitrarily to extirpate, root and branch, the proper notion of moral personality.

The theory of immediate imputation supposes Adam to have stood by divine appointment as the federal head of the race, their representative, so that his act was to be viewed not merely as his own but as the act of the race. The repre-

sentative sinned; and therefore the race in its entirety was counted guilty. What is this but the apotheosis of legal artifice? The same God whose penetrating glance burns away every artifice with which a man may enwrap himself, and reaches at once to the naked reality, is represented as swathing His judgment with a gigantic artifice, in that He holds countless millions guilty of a trespass which He knows was committed before their personal existence, and which they could no more prevent than they could hinder the fiat of creation. If this is justice, then justice is a word of unknown meaning. Sane men condemn the savagery of the tribe which treats all of a nation as enemies because one or more of its representatives has offended. Shall sane men, then, think of the holy God as condemning a race in advance of its existence because of the sin of one? God's ways are indeed above man's. But they must be supposed to lie in the direction of man's best conceptions of justice and righteousness. To impute an unethical arbitrariness to God is to assail faith in the very idea of a Perfect Being.

According to the doctrine of mediate imputation, the posterity of Adam are counted guilty, not because they are viewed as sinning in their representative, but because they have from the start a nature which was corrupted in Adam. The corrupted nature comes by natural descent, and is accounted a sufficient cause of condemnation in the sight of God. This view has been thought to ameliorate the arbitrariness which belongs to the doctrine of immediate imputation; but there is little reason to prefer one to the other. Any evil which is matter of pure inheritance cannot rationally be made a ground of the moral reprobation of the person inheriting. To him it is calamity, and more properly calls for compassion than for condemnation. It may not be æsthetically pleasing. No more is congenital lameness æsthetically pleasing. If it is irrational cruelty to blame one for a bodily deficit which was thus given, rather than acquired by personal misconduct, it is, in like

manner, gross injustice to blame one for a spiritual deficit which was imposed outright and in no part was acquired. Not the inheritance, but what is done with it, determines the question of blame. A man is bound to make the best possible use of it. Only when in the exercise of his free agency he embraces and follows out the abnormal bent which came by inheritance, instead of using available means to oppose and conquer it, is he brought into condemnation.

Aside from these two phases of imputation a pale and misty form has been founded on the notion that God viewed the race as condemned to extinction on account of Adam's fall, and as acquiring a title to existence only through the projected work of Christ. But this notion cannot consistently be utilized for a definition of original sin as an actual status of men at birth. An order of thought respecting a non-existent or hypothetical subject is not determinative of the standing of an existing or real subject. The race as non-salvable, or apart from available conditions of blessedness, is a purely hypothetical subject which was never posited in the creative purpose, and with which it is no more proper to connect any notion of divine dealing than it is to ask a man what he would have done if he had never been born. The thought of God's ethical nature is enough to assure us that He could never have purposed to create a non-salvable race. It requires us to conclude that the provision of tolerable conditions for the continuance of the race was a precondition of the purpose or decision to bring it into existence.

We reach the conclusion then that guilt cannot possibly be a matter of inheritance, and that consequently original sin can be affirmed of the posterity of Adam only in the sense of hereditary corruption, which first becomes an occasion of guilt when it is embraced by the will of the individual. The force of this hereditary corruption must be regarded as different in different persons, if observation is to count for anything. In all, it limits rather than positively cancels receptivity for the

divine life. Since it belongs to the idea of man to be in vital connection with God, it savors of exaggeration to estimate hereditary corruption by what a man would be in a so-called *natural* state, which is taken to mean a state of isolation from all spiritual influence from above. Such a state would be decidedly *unnatural*. Not what a man would be apart from all beneficent impact of God's Spirit measures the force of hereditary corruption, but rather the extent to which his inner bent tends to hinder the vitalizing influence and guiding agency of that Spirit. As there is always some receptivity for this influence and agency at the beginning of a man's moral career, *total depravity* is in any case an ill-chosen term to describe hereditary corruption, at least where there is a pretense to anything like scientific accuracy. Still, both the Scriptures and experience teach that the current of corrupt nature is in general strong, and that the task of turning it back requires the best aids which heavenly wisdom and might can supply. It can be said reverently that the recovery of the race is costly work even for God Himself.

The above discussion affords a standard for measuring personal sinfulness. Evidently such perverse impulses and affections as are purely matter of inheritance do not by themselves fall under that category. With impulses which are produced or nurtured by a perverse direction of the will, the case is appreciably different. Doubtless these cannot be placed on a parity with the ruling choice or attitude of will. But they are not indifferent attachments to moral personality, not simple misfortune. They constitute a chargeable abnormity. Of course when the direction of the will is changed and it ceases to foster them, their relative place in the description of character is greatly reduced. In spite of them a man can be approved as having the essential basis of true character. They need, nevertheless, to be healed, and the responsible originator of them is bound to deplore them with greater or less humiliation of spirit till that end is reached.

Part IV.

THE PERSON AND WORK OF THE REDEEMER.

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CHAPTER I.

THE PERSON OF CHRIST.

I. — The Fact of Christ's Human Nature.

It is consonant with the leading conception of God as *holy love* that in the enterprise of rescuing a race of sinners He should have chosen the method of incarnation. Hereby love was given the highest manifestation and the best opportunity to work with victorious efficiency.

The evangelist, in describing the initial act in the great work of grace and love, says: "The Word became flesh."[1] In the light of the trinitarian theory, as set forth in a preceding chapter, this sentence requires us to think of a Divine Person, the Son of God, as appropriating at least a part of human nature and condition. Taken in its most restricted sense, it denotes that the preëxistent Son of God assumed a human body as the visible side of His personality. But it is not at all necessary to suppose that the statement was designed to be taken precisely in this restricted significance. Not to

[1] John i. 14.

recall Paul's usage, the term "flesh" is employed by John in this same Gospel in a manifestly broader sense than that which belongs in strictness to the word body.[1] The term, therefore, cannot properly, in this connection, be interpreted against the idea that the Son of God assumed human nature in its entirety, so as to possess in His incarnate state a rational soul as well as a body. The evangelist probably did not regard himself as giving here a precise definition of Christ's person, and meant only to emphasize the truth that the preëxistent Logos, who had always been a principle of light and life in the world, came to concrete and settled manifestation in the form of man.

The tenor of the New Testament may be described as distinctly favoring the conclusion that the person of Christ was inclusive of a complete human nature. It is true that there is not a single sentence that amounts quite to an explicit assertion of this conclusion. But in not a few passages there are points of view which suggest that Christ was truly man, whatever more He may have been.

It is not a little significant that two of the writings which most emphasize His divinity, namely, the fourth Gospel and the Epistle to the Hebrews, contain the fullest evidence in behalf of His proper humanity. This fact betokens that, in apostolic thinking, divinity and humanity were not taken as mutually exclusive. The language in the Epistle to the Hebrews is especially cogent. In representing Christ as taking hold of the seed of Abraham instead of angels, as holding to men the relation of brother, and as being made in all respects like unto His brethren (Heb. ii. 11–17), it falls little short of a dogmatic assertion that Christ possessed human nature in its integrity.

The same truth is brought out indirectly in all that class of passages which speak of the growth of Christ, of His tempta-

[1] John iii. 6, xvii. 2.

tion, and of various traits and experiences which are appropriate to the human soul.[1] Doubtless those who believe the complete humanification of the Logos to be possible have a way of explaining these passages without postulating a human soul in Christ. But, as will be shown subsequently, their position encounters a serious rational objection. It also involves a forfeit from the religious point of view. For, unless one who proceeds from this standpoint has the hardihood to affirm that the Logos was permanently alienated from the divine mode of being, He must be supposed, after the season of humiliation, to retain the distinctively human element only as a memory of past experiences. That which in particular constituted him a brother among men is no longer present to His person. At least, the most apprehensible ground of brotherhood has vanished.

A testimony to the human nature of Christ may also be discerned in the name "Son of Man," which the gospel narratives report to have been applied by Himself several scores of times. It is true that some exegetes contend that this title, as used by Christ, was purely official, being based upon Dan. vii. 13, and signifying simply the Messiah. But even if the Messianic association of the title was a motive for its appropriation, it is reasonable to conclude that it was in itself agreeable to the consciousness of Christ, accordant with His sense of truth and fitness, or else it would not have claimed so distinctly His preference. The extent of its use in His discourses is more or less of a token that He inwardly confessed Himself to be a sharer in human nature.[2] Doubtless it was convenient in the earlier part of His ministry, when He wished to avoid an open proclamation of His Messiahship, to use a title that was simply suggestive of a Messianic office rather than un-

[1] Luke ii. 40, 51, 52, iv. 1–12, xxii. 41–44; Matt. iv. 1–11, xi. 29, xii. 46–50, xiv. 23, xxvi. 36–44; John iv. 6, v. 30, xi. 33–38, xii. 27, xiii. 21, xix. 26, 27; 1 Cor. xv. 45; Heb. ii. 10, 18, iv. 15, v. 7–9.

[2] Compare James Stalker, The Christology of Jesus, pp. 70–79.

equivocally declarative of the same. However, if the name "Son of Man" served thus to give an unobtrusive and partially veiled expression to a Messianic consciousness, and this was a motive for its choice, it still witnesses in a negative way to Christ's sense of partnership in human nature. We can hardly suppose that He would have been partial to a name which carried an import distinctly contrary to His self-consciousness.[1]

If less cogent than the scriptural evidence, the rational ground for imputing complete humanity to Christ is to be credited with a certain weight. Without this component in His person, He would seem to fall short of the ideal qualification for the offices of redemption, reconciliation, and headship. We are not, indeed, disposed to contend that without the hypostatic union of a human nature with the divine in the Redeemer, He would have had no true means of saving men and uniting them with God. Men are saved by spiritual influence exercised upon them individually, and not by the mere exaltation of a specimen of human nature into divine union. The lot of human nature in Christ can affect positively the lot of human nature outside only as it is a medium of manifesting truth, or conveying some form of spiritual potency. The means of actually grappling with men, influencing, persuading and subduing them, are above all else the necessary instruments of their salvation. And it is going much too far to say that there would have been no such means, that all the purity, beauty, and grace manifested in our incarnate Lord could have no redeeming efficacy, unless the complete essence of humanity was united in Him with the essence of divinity. Again, we are not disposed to affirm that the Son of God needed to assume a human soul in order, on His part, to stand in a sympa-

[1] An indication that in the minds of the people the term "Son of Man" was not clearly recognized to be an equivalent for "Messiah" may be discerned in the form of the question which Christ put to His disciples, as reported in Matt. xvi. 13, "Who do men say that the Son of Man is?"

thetic relation with men. This line of thought is derogatory to the divine heart. Whence come the tenderness of human sympathy and the warmth of human love? What more are they in their best expressions, than reflected beams of that incomparable light which shines in divine altitudes? But, notwithstanding these concessions, there is room still to hold that the human nature of Christ enters as a completing element into the conception of His office as Redeemer and head of the race. If it does not make the Son of God nearer to men in the fact of a sympathetic interest, it does make Him nearer in the apprehension of men. And from a practical point of view this is all-important. To the average man the very thought that the Mediator has a human heart and soul is a kind of introduction to Him, and through Him to the Supreme Father. It is a spring of confidence and home-like feeling which is often needed even by the most spiritually minded. When the idea of God tends to lose a part of its vitality through vagueness and generality, a point of connection and renewed apprehension is given in the vision of Him who is brother by possession of our nature, as well as Lord by His transcendence of human limitations. Taking men, accordingly, as they are, and making due account of their actual needs, it seems necessary to conclude that the ideal fulfillment of His gracious offices requires the Redeemer to share truly in the nature of those to be redeemed.

From the first era of distinct christological construction the Church, with moderate exceptions, has deemed it necessary to predicate a complete human nature of Christ. The temptation to simplify the problem of the Redeemer's person by excluding one factor or another has generally been resisted. Thus the fathers of the fourth century were not driven by the Arian reproach, that they compromised the unity of Christ's person, to let go the doctrine that the preëxistent Son of God assumed a human soul as well as a body. Apollinaris was indeed discomfited by the Arian objection, and concluded that it was a matter of discretion to teach that the Logos took the place

of the rational soul in Christ, so that the incarnation must be understood as involving only the assumption of a human body with its principle of physical life. The Apollinarian tenet, however, was discarded by the Nicene fathers. It was condemned at the Council of Constantinople in 381, and in 451 the Council of Chalcedon affirmed the integrity of Christ's human nature, declaring Him possessed of a "rational soul and a body, consubstantial with us according to His manhood, in all things like unto us, without sin." In recent times the theory of Apollinaris has had an occasional advocate; but its abridgment of Christ's human nature is quite outside of the main current. Indeed, it may be described as a characteristic tendency of the later theology to insist, that whatever higher factor may have been included in His person, Christ was truly man.

The dogmatic value of this christological consensus depends undoubtedly very much upon the amount of free mental engagement and healthy feeling back of it, as opposed to the constraint of ecclesiastical authority and the indolent acceptance of theological precedent. It will not be rash, however, to regard it as carrying a general presumption of truth, though the greater weight belongs to the testimony of Scripture and to a rational view of the demands of the Redeemer's offices.

II. — Distinctive Features of Christ as Man.

The New Testament represents Christ's manhood as distinguished in two eminent particulars, namely, supernatural conception and sinlessness. The former is distinctly affirmed in two of the Gospels.[1] To those not ill-affected toward accounts of the supernatural, this makes a credible historic basis. It is true that if Mark had dealt with the infancy of

[1] Matt. i. 18, 20; Luke i. 31–38.

Jesus, a reference to the supernatural conception might be looked for in his narrative. But, inasmuch as this evangelist saw fit to begin the story of Jesus with His baptism, his omission of one of the conditions of the nativity in nowise discredits the reports of the other evangelists. As for John, the plan of his narrative excluded any detailed reference to the birth of Christ. Moreover, as he wrote after the Gospels of Matthew and Luke were at hand, his silence imports at least that he had no interest to contradict their statements on this subject.

The fact that no reference, direct or indirect, is made to the supernatural conception in other parts of the New Testament is not necessarily a ground for scepticism. A reference to it ought not to be expected in the body of the Gospels. How could Christ or His friends be inclined to make public mention of such a theme as the peculiarity of His conception in that atmosphere charged with hostility and suspicion? Delicacy and prudence naturally put a seal upon their lips, when to speak would have moved the slanderous tongue to base insinuations against Mary and her Son. The venom which afterwards flowed from the pen of Celsus and others, in charges of adultery and bastardy, may serve to teach us that it was no unnatural reserve which kept the fact of the supernatural conception in the background till a believing community had been established. As respects the silence of the Epistles, it may affect in some measure our estimate of the dogmatic significance of the supernatural conception, but it cannot legitimately be cited against the historic fact. On the contrary, it is an evidence in favor of the assumed fact, as testifying that it was not imported into the record to accommodate any supposed dogmatic necessity.

If not accounted for by a dogmatic interest, what shall explain the reference to the supernatural conception in Matthew and Luke? It is a poor explanation, certainly, which is found in the contagion of contemporary systems of thought. In

a community which was composed largely of converts from Judaism, and was under the direction of apostles who were all of Jewish antecedents, there was naturally too much antipathy to Gentile mythologies to allow suggestions from their stories of the birth of heroes and divinities to be borrowed and incorporated into representative documents. Indeed, we can point to the indisputable fact that already thoughtful heathen had become ashamed of the misalliances of their gods with mortals, and that early Christian literature refers to them throughout in a tone of sharp criticism and irony. As regards the circle of Judaism, the evidence is wanting that there was a current expectation that the Messiah would be conceived by the Holy Spirit. In truth, an inference directly to the contrary is strongly favored by the fact that a prominent wing of the Judaizing Ebionites rejected the account of the supernatural conception. Being thus without explanation in Gentile mythology or Jewish expectation, that account may justly be regarded as belonging to the early or apostolic tradition.

The fact that the New Testament makes no specific dogmatic use of the supposition of the supernatural conception may well render us cautious about asserting that it was an indispensable condition of the ideal character which pertained to Jesus. Nevertheless, we shall be at a loss to imagine a more economical expedient for bringing about such a character. If we suppose natural generation, we have still to explain the unique balance of temperament in Christ and His superiority to the ordinary traces of human infirmity and corruption. But it is far from clear that we can carry through this explanation without presuming upon a conditioning agency of God, a supernatural intervention, quite the equivalent of that which is implied in the assumption of conception by the extraordinary agency of the Holy Spirit.

The second distinction of Christ, His sinlessness, was manifestly one with which the apostolic consciousness was

thoroughly penetrated. John represents Christ as saying, with evident reference to Himself: "He that seeketh the glory of Him that sent Him, the same is true, and no unrighteousness is in Him."[1] Again the evangelist puts these words into His mouth: "He that sent me is with me; He hath not left me alone, for I do always the things which are pleasing to Him."[2] Furthermore, in his First Epistle he makes this unqualified declaration: "Ye know that He was manifested to take away sins; and in Him is no sin."[3] Peter speaks of Christ as one "who did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth."[4] The author of the Epistle to the Hebrews pronounces Jesus "without sin" in the face of all temptations,[5] and characterizes Him as "holy, guileless, and undefiled."[6] Paul makes this unequivocal declaration of Christ's sinlessness: "Him who knew no sin He made to be sin on our behalf; that we might become the righteousness of God in Him."[7] Less directly, but yet in no doubtful terms, he expresses the same sentiment in these words: "What the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and as an offering for sin, condemned sin in the flesh."[8] In fine, the complete sinlessness of Christ can be described as nothing less than a central and fundamental assumption in apostolic thought. It was the axiom prefixed to the whole apostolic doctrine of salvation.

Objections to the supposition of a sinless humanity in the Redeemer from a philosophic standpoint need very little consideration, since they have no other ground than the arbitrary assumption of a necessary connection between imperfection and finite personality. Scarcely more account needs to be made of the historical objections which some writers have thought fit to enumerate, bringing their criticisms to bear, for example, upon the act of Christ in reproving the

[1] John vii. 18. [2] John viii. 29. [3] 1 John iii. 5. [4] 1 Pet. ii. 22. [5] Heb. iv. 15. [6] Heb. vii. 26. [7] 2 Cor. v. 21. [8] Rom. viii. 3.

over-anxiety of His mother, or the sharpness with which He rebuked pharisaical hypocrisy, or the indignation with which He expelled the traffickers from the temple, or the curse pronounced by Him upon the barren fig-tree. Instances of this sort make too petty a ground of impeachment to be of account except in the eyes of a criticism that is predisposed to seek for flaws. They can be explained from admissible, not to say intrinsically preferable, points of view. The outflow of righteous indignation against the temple traffickers and the scathing rebuke of the Pharisees were justifiable in themselves, and were a needed warning to all the Christian ages against practices and tempers which pervert and caricature religion.[1] The incident of the fig-tree may be taken as a visible parable conveying an important lesson. As to words in other connections into which it is possible to read a suggestion of severity, it is to be said that the kindness and tender consideration, which in general were certainly characteristic of Jesus, may be presumed to have ruled His tone and manner in such a way as to exclude all misplaced asperity.

Positive proof of Christ's sinlessness by way of analysis is of course entirely out of the question, since large areas of His earthly life are hidden from sight. But if proof in this sense cannot be forthcoming, adequate grounds for a rational faith are not wanting. Aside from the apostolic witness we have the unique fact of a total absence in the life of Christ of any disclosure of a consciousness of sin. How explain this exemption from the shadow which belongs to all ordinary human consciousness? If it was not due to a genuine reality, it was

[1] "The prophetic spirit," says James Martineau, "is sometimes oblivious of the rules of the drawing-room; and inspired conscience, like the inspiring God, seeing a hypocrite, will take the liberty to say so, and act accordingly. Are the superficial amenities, the soothing fictions, the smotherings of the burning heart really paramount in this world, and never to give way? And when a soul of power, unable to refrain, rubs off, though it be with rasping words, all the varnish from rottenness and lies, is he to be tried in our courts of compliment for a misdemeanor?" (Cited by Lidgett, The Spiritual Principle of the Atonement, p. 29.)

an eccentricity which naturally would have borne fruit in practical aberrations. As Bushnell aptly remarks: "Piety without one dash of repentance, one ingenuous confession of wrong, one tear, one look of contrition, one request to heaven for pardon — let any one of mankind try this kind of piety, and see how long it will be ere his righteousness will prove itself to be the most impudent conceit! how long before his passions, sobered by no contrition, his pride kept down by no repentance, will tempt him into absurdities that will turn his pretenses to mockery!"[1] The fact that no such aberration is discoverable in the life of Christ is a cogent evidence that His unconsciousness of sin was not chargeable to any mist of self-deception. Again, we meet in Christ a spiritual freedom, which argues that as He knew not the guilt of sin, so He was not subject to its shackles. "He stands free in the presence of law and tradition, of friend and foe, of the world and the Father, whom He obeys not otherwise than in perfect freedom. Everywhere He feels and manifests Himself as the Son of the house, who is free, and makes free, in opposition to the slaves of sin."[2] Still further, along with this consistent accompaniment of a guiltless conscience, there is another which is no less consistent, and which, therefore, comes into evidence as being a conspicuous element in a harmonious picture of a sinless personality. We refer to Christ's claim to be the judge of all men. Where should the consciousness of such an office reside except in the spirit of Him who was clearly assured that there was no ground of adverse judgment against Himself? Such a factor in His consciousness points either to sinlessness or to a high pitch of self-deception. How little the choice of the latter alternative comports with a sane judgment must be felt by everyone who duly contemplates the life of Christ, with its matchless impress of balance, proportion, and fulness of spiritual wisdom.

[1] Nature and the Supernatural, pp. 285, 286.

[2] Van Oosterzee, Dogmatics, p. 500.

Viewed as to its practical import, Christ's sinless humanity must be regarded as the choicest and most significant of miracles. To men who know the desperate tenacity of sin, and long for deliverance, the vision of one who was tempted, but yet without sin, is a perennial source of inspiration and hope. It illustrates and enforces, as nothing else can, the idea of a possible glorification of human nature. Association in thought with such a captain of our salvation has in itself a redemptive potency.

The question, however, has arisen whether the fact of temptation is consonant with that of sinlessness. That this question must be answered in the affirmative has already been shown in the discussion of the primal apostasy. It belongs to a finite nature, at least before character has been confirmed by the use of personal agency, to be temptable. As a man, Christ may be supposed to have had the sensibilities, affections, and spontaneous impulses which are native to man. If love of power, thirst for happiness, aversion to pain, shrinking from disgrace, and desire to please are characteristic motives in the heart of man, they may be judged to have had a foundation also in Christ's human constitution. Now any one of these constitutional traits might conceivably become a ground of temptation. For example, the natural gratification in the use of power might urge to an exhibition of might and authority out of harmony with His vocation. Why should He let the stones mock his hunger when He was able to turn them into bread? Why should He expose Himself as a defenseless man when His word of command could bring legions of angels to His relief? In like manner the human desire of happiness in the bosom of Christ and his instinctive aversion from pain and disgrace might start a recoil from the ordeal of the judgment hall, the crown of thorns, and the shameful cross.

The unique relation of the human in Christ to the divine may be thought to have furnished Him with a very special support in temptation. In one point of view this must appear

to have been so, though it is far from legitimate to imagine the divine and the human in Christ to have been related like two physical magnitudes, of which the lesser necessarily yields to the greater. But, in another point of view, the extraordinary in the person and consciousness of Christ can be seen to have added to the sharpness of His trial, since trial is to be measured by the height of the dignity which it assails as well as by the depth of the discomfort to which it casts down. It may be easy for a lamb to be led as a lamb to the slaughter; but how should it be easy for the Lion of the Tribe of Judah to be thus led? How should it be easy for Him, who, out of the fullness of His conscious life and power, could call Himself the "resurrection and the life," to be made a spectacle of weakness, of shame, and of dying? Thus the very factor in His personality which gave special support, at the same time involved special trial, as broadening the contrast between conscious dignity and actual lot.

The pain of temptation in the case of Christ is not to be estimated by the liability of falling. As Bruce has well remarked, "Sinful dispositions, though certainly making men more liable to fall before temptation, do not increase the painful sense of being tempted, but rather diminish it."[1] As to the fact of this liability on the part of Christ, it seems speculatively necessary, in consideration of the reality of His humanity, to allow that it existed in some measure, though to the mysterious forecast of the divine omniscience it was certain that the liability would never issue into an actual fault.

[1] Humiliation of Christ, p. 266.

III. — The Problem of the Union of the Human and the Divine in Christ.

Recalling the proofs of Christ's divinity, and conjoining them with the tokens of His complete humanity, we are confronted with the great problem of His person, the union of the divine and the human.

Before dealing formally with this problem, it will be appropriate to consider how far there is a real demand for a solution. Certainly it would be a gross mistake to imagine that pious contemplation must be arrested, or that faith must renounce a joyful apprehension of the honor and blessing conferred upon man by the incarnation, until speculation has framed a consistent view of the way in which the human and the divine are related in Christ's person. As well wait for a calculation of the size of the sun before enjoying his light and warmth, or for an exact determination of the distance of the stars before taking in the impression of majesty and glory which falls from the evening sky. The wealth of Christ's person is a source of edification in advance of, and apart from, all formal analytic or constructive effort. In a general view, such as an artist takes of a comprehensive subject, the antithesis between the human and the divine in our Lord scarcely conveys an impression of incongruity. As the human spirit is in the image of the divine, the perfections of a pure human spirit are in the direction of divine perfections. So a glance at the human graces of Christ gives an authentic suggestion of what is in the profoundest depths of His being. As regards any ethical trait, the passage from the human to the divine is the passage from the image or symbol to that which is shadowed forth thereby. And, even in relation to aspects which involve more contrast, there is very largely occasion for pleasing wonderment rather than for perplexity. Who finds any painful enigma in the conjunction of tender sympathy with superior might? Who is stumbled by seeing the one who commanded

the winds and the waves so entering into the affliction of beloved friends as to weep at the tomb of Lazarus? If suffering and humiliation seem foreign to so exalted a person, they but serve to emphasize the mystery of His loving condescension. Even the thought itself of the union of the finite with the transcendent, however the intellect may wrestle with it, has its consoling mystery, for the human heart feels itself enriched in contemplating a Redeemer who is at once in its own plane and exalted above it by the possession of limitless glory.

The above may serve to illustrate, that edifying contemplation of the divine-human Christ does not depend upon a speculative solution of the problem of His person, and that its legitimacy is not brought in question by the poor success of this or that speculative attempt. Nevertheless, it is undoubtedly a part of the task of theological science to work out, as far as possible, the christological problem. The end to be reached, it is hardly needful to say, is such an exposition of the relation of the human and the divine in Christ as is required on the one hand by the historical data, and on the other by rational conceptions of personality, as also by normal views of the essential attributes of humanity and divinity.

IV. — Attempts at a Solution of the Christological Problem.

Since the close of the great christological controversies, which began in the fourth century and ended in the seventh, there has been a formal repudiation in the Church at large both of Nestorianism and of Monophysitism, both of the scheme which is deemed to compromise the unity of Christ's person and of that which fuses or confounds the two natures. In other words, the creed of the Council of Chalcedon has been taken as the common basis. But it has been felt in some quarters that this creed rather gives the elements that

are to be recognized, than offers any complete and satisfactory view of their interrelation. Accordingly, attempts have been made at a further construction in the interest of a more unified view of the divine-human personality of the Redeemer. The more radical of these attempts have not won any eminent success, as will appear from an examination of the doctrine of the *communicatio idiomatum* and that of the *Kenosis*.

The rise of the former was associated with the eucharistic controversy between the Lutheran and Zwinglian party in the early stages of the Reformation. In sustaining his doctrine of the real presence, Luther found occasion to affirm ubiquity of Christ's body; and, to account for the possession of this property, he resorted to the thought of an interchange of predicates between the divine and the human nature. In the development of the Lutheran christology, the idea of a communication from the human side to the divine soon receded from sight, and pretty much the whole stress was laid upon the communication of the divine predicates to the manhood of Christ. It was held in the more stringent form of the doctrine that in virtue of this communication Christ as man was omnipresent, omnipotent, and omniscient from the first moment of His conception, and, as man, made a constant, though secret, use of the divine attributes. In the least ultra phase of the doctrine, an intermittent or occasional communication was assumed; but the tendency, even of the moderate party, was to recede from this position, and to maintain that, while there was only an occasional use of the divine attributes, these were in the constant possession of Christ on the side of His manhood.

In its general tenor, the theory of the *communicatio idiomatum* may be described as an expedient to gain a unified view of Christ's person by making the humanity coëxtensive with the divinity. But what is actually gained is rather a virtual elimination of the human side than a consistent conception of its union with the divine. A humanity which, from

its first inception, is vested with the divine attributes, is not a real humanity. It is claimed, indeed, that the integrity of the human nature is not cancelled, since the divine attributes are not supposed to pertain to it naturally, but only by communication. This plea, however, is not satisfactory. Either the human nature must appear to be despoiled of its proper activity and character, or no special advantage in respect of unity can be seen to be achieved by the theory of communicated predicates. If the communication, as the conditions seem to require, effects that the human nature should not subsist at all on the limited human scale — corporeal, intellectual, and volitional — then it is only a theoretic entity, — merely something that would be were it not for the radical transformation or nullification which is constantly effected from the side of Christ's divinity. What is actually presented is the divine under a new category, namely, that of communication, plus an abstract or nominal humanity. If, on the other hand, the human, in its characteristic finitude, is assumed in any wise to remain, notwithstanding the communication, then the humanity of Christ must be supposed to subsist in a double character, an element not commensurate with the divine is predicated, and the unified view which was sought is not obtained.

It must also be regarded as the reverse of a recommendation of the theory in question, that it is not naturally suggested by the life of Christ as recorded in the New Testament. No unsophisticated reader of the Gospels would ever derive a hint from them that the ascension was coincident with the incarnation, that humanity in the infant Jesus was at once uplifted to the plane of a world-governing omnipotence. In fact, such a conception of the result of the incarnation is contradicted with sufficient plainness by the declaration that Christ in His childhood grew in wisdom,[1] and by the intimation that His knowl-

[1] Luke ii. 52.

edge, even at the stage of manhood, was not unbounded.[1] A partial escape from collision with the evangelical narratives is indeed open to those holding that the use of the communicated predicates was largely suspended during the earthly life of Christ. But their point of view has its special difficulties, such as the assumed possession of inoperative divine attributes. This looks very much like a non-causal causality. What can be meant by an unused omniscience and omnipresence, or an optional use of omniscience and omnipresence, is puzzling to determine.

Some of the above criticisms lie close to the question of the possibility of the alleged communication of divine predicates to the human nature. Where is the warrant for assuming this possibility? It is certainly no dictate either of experience or reason that a finite nature or substance can become the possessor of infinite properties. The ordinary philosophical supposition is that properties are descriptive of substance, that there is nothing else which can make substance known to us, and, consequently, that they cannot be known as either above or below its measure. To assume a property exceeding indefinitely the nature of that to which it is communicated is to assume that our sole means of knowing a particular substance may have no accord with that substance, or, in other words, that the exclusive means of interpreting the nature of a thing may contradict its nature. In this line of procedure the conception of identity is hopelessly confused. For, what test of identity is available if we hold that the nature of the subject remains the same when properties which belong entirely outside the plane of its nature have been added? As well suppose

[1] Matt. xxiv. 36; Mark xiii. 32. An interpretation somewhat current among the fathers, namely, that Christ spoke here simply as a man, is not adapted to carry conviction. On the contrary, the very form of the expression, the climax employed — "no one, not even the angels in heaven, neither the Son" — testifies that He spoke out of a consciousness of transcendent rank, out of the sense of His position as the Son of God.

that the brute nature continues to be the brute nature when invested with all the high attributes of rational manhood, as to suppose that human nature does not forfeit its identity when invested with the incommensurate attributes of divinity. A communication which thus cannot be conceived, without a displacement of the supposed subject of it, appears philosophically impossible. With all respect, then, for the learning and subtlety of the eminent theologians who have advocated the doctrine of the *communicatio idiomatum* we cannot regard their theory as a true aid to the solution of the christological problem.

The radical doctrine of the *Kenosis*[1] is in a manner the reverse of that just examined, as aiming to secure a unified view of Christ's person by bringing the divine down to the plane and measure of humanity. This is the characteristic feature of the doctrine in all its phases, of which three are sufficiently distinct to merit attention.

The first of these Kenotic theories is that advocated by Thomasius. Without a self-limitation of the divine, he claims, no true union with the human is possible. The divine self-consciousness is an infinitely larger circle than the human, and their coëxistence implies a dualism destructive to personal unity. To gain a basis for unity there must be a depotentiation of the divine. Such, in fact, occurred when the Word was made flesh. The eternal Logos emptied Himself, not indeed of what is strictly essential to God, but of the divine mode of being. He put aside the divine glory, the divine self-consciousness, the divine attributes connected with the dominion of the world, such as omnipotence, omniscience, and omnipresence, renouncing not merely their use, but their possession as well. He came entirely within the limits of a human earthly life. "In the totality of His being He became man." The essential holiness and truth of the divine

[1] The term was suggested by Phil. ii. 7, *ἐκένωσε ἑαυτόν*, "he emptied himself."

nature assumed in Him the form of human volition and thought; the absolute love and freedom took on the form of human feeling and self-determination. There was no distinction between a divine and a human consciousness in Him, but only a distinction of moments, or elements, in a single self-consciousness, somewhat as in the regenerate man the undivided self-consciousness includes the two moments of the divine and the natural life. Having descended from the divine to the human rank, He returned after the analogy of a human development, and, in the glorification which followed His earthly ministry, rose completely to His original plane, appearing thenceforth as the omnipotent, omniscient, God-man.[1]

A second form of Kenotic doctrine is represented by Gess. Though Thomasius affirmed a human soul in Christ, his scheme, with its humanized Logos, appears to have very little use for such a constituent. Gess boldly decided for its rejection altogether. As he represents, the Logos became the human soul that dwelt in the body derived from the Virgin. Apollinaris was right in refusing to conjoin the Logos with a human soul; but he was radically in error in making the incarnated Logos immutable. He was every way man, with the characteristic mutability of man, able to sin, though in fact sinless. Such a theory seems to involve the conclusion that one of the Divine Persons disappeared for a time from the Trinity. Gess admits this in the fullest terms. The depotentiation of the Logos, as he teaches, affected the life of the Godhead in a fourfold manner: (1) The Father suspended the communication of divine life to the Son. (2) The Son ceased to be joint source for the procession of the Holy Spirit. (3) The Son ceased to be the upholding and conserving principle of the world. (4) In reassuming His glory, the Son entered as man into the Trinity.[2]

Naturally this free dealing with the subject of the Trinity

[1] Dogmatik, §§ 38–45. [2] Lehre von der Person Christi.

was not acceptable to all advocates of the doctrine of the Kenosis. We have accordingly a third type of Kenotic teaching represented by Ebrard and some others, which endeavors to keep the trinitarian scheme inviolate by the assumption of a double life of the Logos. On the one hand, as they teach, the Logos becomes the man Jesus, emptied of His divine glory, and possessed of a purely human consciousness and will; on the other hand, He retains without interruption His existence and activity in the Trinity. The same ego subsists at once in the eternal and the temporal mode, as infinite and as confined by the narrow bounds of man's estate.[1]

The several theories under review, as having a common element in their assumption of the depotentiation of the divine, are open to a common objection. This vast assumption, in spite of all that has been said in its behalf, stands greatly in need of being made to appear rationally credible. The natural supposition is that a being truly divine in essence cannot be reduced to the scale of finitude. It is urged, indeed, that self-mastery ought to be regarded as characteristic of the divine, and that self-mastery implies the power of self-limitation. But a divine being is eternal and necessary, possessed of infinite and essential life. Now can the necessary recede toward nonentity? Can infinite and essential life descend to the plane of finitude and growth? This would not be self-mastery on the part of the absolute, but self-contradiction or self-annihilation. Self-mastery is a name for determination within the limits of the essential attributes of self, not a name for self-cancellation. As applied to the divine it can properly mean only harmonious self-direction, not the infinite violence which turns the limitless and living God into a half-conscious or sleeping infant. Self-repression to this extent may logically be considered as demanding the continuous exercise of infinite

[1] We have used substantially the language of the History of Doctrine, II. 349–351, since we could find no briefer terms which might suitably describe these theories.

power, and hence as being in its very idea a self-contradiction.[1]

It is urged, indeed, that in the Kenosis nothing strictly essential to divinity is laid aside, but only the modes of the Divine Being. Are then the modes of a Divine Being mere artificial appendages which can be cast off at discretion? Is it legitimate to suppose that He in whom is no darkness can become opaque to Himself, relinquishing self-consciousness, and lapsing into forgetfulness? Will a sound theistic philosophy allow that the integrity of the divine nature can be regarded as still remaining when it has been despoiled of omnipotence, omniscience, and omnipresence? Thomasius tells us, it is true, that these attributes have relation to the world, that God gave them to Himself, and accordingly can be conceived as relinquishing them. But this is a misleading representation. The display of God's power in the creation of the universe was indeed optional, and the continuation of that display is likewise to be regarded as optional, since the prerogative of annihilation is with God. But suppose the universe of creatures to continue standing apart from the power of God. The thought cannot be entertained without being pushed logically into a dualism which compromises God's absolute might and supremacy. The legitimate idea of God requires that His power be conceived as back of and underneath and operative in all being. In like manner, omniscience in the sense of a perfect knowledge of all reality belongs to the proper idea of God. Of course he could not know the world as actual until He brought it into actual existence. But, supposing the world to be actual, it cannot be thought to be removed from His knowledge without a denial of His perfection and His absolute supremacy. For the like reason it cannot be dissociated from

[1] "The power that represses infinite power cannot be itself less than infinite. The notion of the self-limitation of an omnipotent Being is one which dissolves in the very attempt to grasp it." (John Caird, Fundamental Ideas of Christianity, II. 128.)

His presence. A world apart from the power, knowledge, and presence of God would be an independent world — a thoroughly antitheistic conception. In fine, the radical doctrine of the Kenosis is chargeable with as great a violence to the divine nature as that which the theory of the *communicatio idiomatum* is guilty of against the human nature of the Redeemer.

With this general criticism belong some special strictures upon the different types of Kenotic teaching. The first, or that represented by Thomasius, is open to the objection that it cannot be seen to secure the personal unity at which it aims. The temporary limitation of the divine may explain how the experiences of Christ were temporarily assimilated to the human type: but, as all the divine attributes and functions are supposed to have been regained after a brief space, we reach ultimately the very same difficulty which belongs to the old Catholic theory; namely, the difficulty in our thought of bringing into the unity of the same person the traits of a human soul, the finite will included, and the attributes of divinity proper. Even as respects the term of Christ's earthly life, it is not discernible that this form of the Kenotic theory provides for complete personal unity. The divine brought down to the plane of the human would be a humanized divine alongside the human nature. The exercises of the former might be similar to those of the latter. But similarity is not identity. The problem would still present itself, as to how, with this double centre, there could be unity of consciousness. Moreover, the similarity has to be reckoned a diminishing characteristic. As the divine advances toward the recovery of its proper attributes and functions, the human soul, inasmuch as it is compelled to remain finite, is outstripped. A widening contrast, as it seems, must ensue between its finite modes and the modes of the eternal Logos. The Kenosis, on the supposition of a complete human nature, provides only for initial similarity of exercises; it affords no advantage for conceiving permanent unity of consciousness.

As presented by Gess, the doctrine of the Kenosis is opposed by all the evidences, scriptural and rational, for the genuine humanity of Christ. It has also to reckon, as was intimated above, with the grounds for the historic faith in the Trinity. What the theory of Gess pictures is a semi-divine person temporarily subjected to human modes of being. We say a "semi-divine person"; for the supposition that the communication of divine life from the Father to the Son can be suspended makes the Son, as regards the actual possession of divinity, a contingent being, and contingency of being is characteristic rather of a creaturely than of a truly divine rank.

The theory of Ebrard makes an enormous demand upon rational thinking in its supposition of a dual mode of subsistence of the same ego. The law of contradiction must appear to be superseded, if the same identical subject can be at once absolutely perfect and subject to growth, omniscient and gradually adding to a finite sum of knowledge. Moreover, even if the law of contradiction were not adjudged to stand in the way, the christological problem does not find in the Ebrardian view a perfect solution. To suppose the Logos to have one mode of being in the Trinity and another in Christ Jesus suggests a duality of consciousness which needs still to be resolved before the divine and the human can appear to be brought into complete personal unity. It would indeed obviate the apparent occasion for a duality in consciousness if the finite form of the ego should be regarded as simply the continuous act or energizing of the eternal and infinite ego. But in that event we should be left without means of predicating any ethical quality of this form, that is, of Christ's manhood. The Son of Man becomes on this supposition the name of an unsubstantial entity, to which the acquirement or maintenance of an ethical character is utterly foreign, since it is continually produced in its totality by the preëxistent infinite subject.

In the face of so serious a list of objections, the radical

doctrine of the Kenosis needs for its commendation a much clearer basis in revelation than it can actually claim. The New Testament contains indeed a doctrine of the Kenosis; but there is no necessity to identify it with any of the phases of Kenotic theory which have been described. This may be inferred from the language of the most specific passage on the subject. In Phil. ii. 5–8 Paul says: "Have this mind in you which was also in Christ Jesus: who, being in the form of God, counted it not a prize to be on an equality with God, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, becoming obedient even unto death, yea, the death of the cross."[1] It is certainly no strained interpretation which regards the cardinal point of view in these verses as that of manifestation. Nothing is said of a change of the divine essence, or of the putting aside of divine attributes. It is the μορφή, the form, the character apprehensible to one standing within the proper sphere of manifestation, that is the subject of choice.[2] The preëxistent Son did not choose such a form of manifestation as was appropriate to, and naturally associated with, His divine dignity. In His marvellous humility, He chose the form of a servant. He who was above principalities and powers, by His own free election, was presented to men in and through suffering, obedience, and death. As a king going into an outlying province in the guise of one of the meanest of his subjects might be said to empty himself of the kingly form, so the Son of God renounced the divine form. Not what He was in Himself was renounced, but a manifestation conformable to His intrinsic dignity and glory. Thus, the vivid picture in this apostolic text can be justified without being taken in the sense of the radical doctrine of the Kenosis. Furthermore, we have a

[1] See also 2 Cor. viii. 9; John xvii. 1, 5.

[2] Meyer regards μορφή as an appropriate concrete expression for the divine δόξα, not equivalent to φύσις or οὐσία, but presupposing the divine φύσις.

hint that the apostle did not so understand it in statements in Colossians respecting the dwelling of the divine fullness in Christ.[1] Nothing is said here to suggest an interruption of this indwelling during the time of the earthly mission. On the contrary, the connection of the verses in chapter i. implies that Christ had the fullness while performing the work of reconciliation, and that a preëminently important stage of this work was completed in the death upon the cross. Thus the representations of the epistle are averse to the supposition of an emptying as respects the inner life of the Son of God.

V. — Extent to Which Christological Construction Can Be Carried on the Basis of the Catholic Presuppositions.

Criticism of the foregoing theories does not necessarily imply confidence that any other theory affords a perfectly satisfactory solution of the christological problem. It may be that in this relation, as in some others, the Christian mind must content itself with something less than clear insight. Certainly it is better to recognize mystery than to appeal to sweeping assumptions that cannot be justified either speculatively or scripturally.

The exposition given, has indicated our agreement in a general way with the catholic presuppositions respecting the components in Christ's person which are to be reckoned with. We have now to consider what approximations to a solution of the christological problem can be made on the basis of these presuppositions.

Some aid to our thinking upon the problem may be found in the consideration, that space-inclusion is foreign to the proper conception of the incarnation, and is to be replaced by

[1] Col. i. 19–22, ii. 9.

the idea of organic connection. There is absolutely no occasion to imagine the divine to have been locally confined. A peculiar union of the same with the humanity of Christ is all that is demanded.

A second aid in conceiving the unity of Christ's person appears in the fact that His human nature was constituted in union with the divine. The incarnation did not consist in the conjunction of the Logos with an independent human subject. The organic bond with the divine personality was coincident with the rise of the human nature, and, in virtue of this special bond, there was a special community from the start between the divine and the human in Christ. This is not exactly equivalent to saying that the human nature, impersonal in itself, received its personality in and through the preëxisting person of the Logos. While various theologians have contended for this form of statement, its legitimacy is not evident. A human will in union with a human intellect implies self-determination in a human mode, and self-determination of this sort implies a human consciousness. Accordingly the integrity of the human nature seems to involve all the necessary elements of personality. Still it is advantageous to conceive the human intellect and will and consciousness in Christ as always having been conjoined by a peculiar bond to the divine, so as not only to receive therefrom with the unfoldment of their capacity, but also to be enriched with an extraordinary capacity for ascending toward the plane of divine wisdom, love, and righteousness.

A third aid may be found in the analogy which is supplied by the relation of soul and body. Though so diverse that no attribute in the one is descriptive of aught in the other, the two, nevertheless, are united in a single personality. This union, it is true, does not furnish a complete parallel to that between the divine and the human natures in Christ. It has to be admitted that the duality of natures in the former case involves no serious theoretical difficulty, just because one

factor is regarded as instrumental to the other, the soul being conceived as the agent and the body the instrument; the latter, indeed, conditioning the action of the former, but never standing in the relation of an agent proper. Now, it will not do to relate the human and the divine in Christ in precisely this way. The human — if, indeed, it is truly human — contains, among other elements, a finite will, and so, in a theoretical point of view, cannot be counted purely instrumental. But while formally or theoretically its position has to be distinguished from that of an instrument, practically the human in Christ may be regarded as instrumental to the divine. In its sinless perfection it was through and through in the line of the divine pleasure. The vision of the human intellect, unclouded by any perverse tempers, and filled with the divine light, was entirely accordant, so far as it reached, with the dictates of divine wisdom. The holy will, swift in its response to the perfect standard, embraced always only what was perfectly suitable to the given connection. Hence, while metaphysically distinguished, in point of contents the human will was in its whole range identical with the divine, or practically instrumental thereto. In fine, it may be said of the whole manhood of Christ that it was so conformed to the wisdom, purpose, and activity of the Logos, that practically it was as truly its instrument as the body is the instrument of the soul. It is to be regarded as having been not occasionally an instrument, but constantly; not an instrument because of a special afflatus now and then from the divine, but because of a peculiar constitutional bond therewith; not, of course, an instrument in a purely passive sense, but through identity of intelligence and will.

A specially emphatic putting of this idea of a practical coalescence of the human will in Christ with the divine appears in the conclusion that the former, through absolute adherence to the Logos, ceased, in fact, to be a distinct principle of action, and is to be described rather under the category of

nature than under that of *personal principle*.[1] If this language be taken as representing an ultimate development, lying beyond the period of earthly trial, it need not necessarily be accused of giving expression to an impossible supposition. Who can estimate the extent to which virtual absorption of the human will into the divine may be carried in the sphere of such unique connection as belongs to them in Christ? No one certainly can disprove the possibility of the whole function of a will being exhausted in a habitude of absolute surrender to a superior will.

The above theory, without the qualification laid down, reduces to a substantial identity with the Monothelitism condemned by the sixth ecumenical council, the distinctive feature of which was the affirmation of one single energy of will in Christ, namely, that belonging to the person of the Divine Son. This view, however, even if in other respects reconcilable with the conception of a real human life on the part of Christ, stands distinctly in the way of supposing in Him a proper human experience of temptation. What temptation assails is especially the will. If, then, the immutable will of the Logos was the sole principle of action in Christ, how could He be the subject of a real temptation? Indeed, from this point of view the broader question arises, How can a truly ethical manhood, or the reality of a holy human character, be attributed to Christ? And in the absence of this, what propriety is there in speaking of His perfect manhood? Manifestly it is a very scanty satisfaction which can be obtained by an appeal to the Monothelite doctrine.

Once more, a helpful consideration may be found in a comparison between the relation of the divine and the human in Christ and the connection which the Holy Spirit has with a devout soul. The comparison brings to view both a similarity and a contrast. The point of similarity is, that in either case

[1] Compare Antonio Rosmini, Introduzione del Vangelo secondo Giovanni, p. 281.

the divine factor does not overbear or cancel the human. The holiest and most inspired man, the man in whom the Holy Spirit works with the greatest efficiency, as truly retains his human identity as the one who is least receptive of His influence. This follows from the consistent method of the Holy Spirit in always respecting the God-given nature of man, or in resorting to no operation out of harmony with his constitution. So the divine in Christ respects its self-ordained bounds, and does not, as by the weight of a superior mass, overbear the human nature. The point of contrast is that the Holy Spirit, though in a sense immanent to a sanctified soul, is not so related thereto as to come within the scope of its self-consciousness, whereas in Christ the peculiar bond between the divine and the human provided for uniting with the elements of His human consciousness a sense of proprietorship in more or less of that belonging to the eternal Logos. The Gospel narratives show that, whatever may have been the contents of Christ's consciousness in the time of infancy and youth, He came to a point where His vision transcended the range of earthly memories, and He had a clear sense of proprietorship in a kingly glory antedating the world. While the range of earthly memories was thus transcended, nothing requires us to suppose that they were obliterated; it is to be concluded rather that they were united with the divine elements which were superinduced, so as to form continuously a part of the total contents of Christ's consciousness.[1]

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[1] Compare the following point of view, urged by an eminent writer against the Apollinarian exclusion of a rational human soul from Christ: "Instead of the presence and action of God in the human spirit involving an impossible dualism, or a suppressing of human individuality, the true conception is rather that the divine life is the condition of the human, the atmosphere in which alone all spiritual life can exist, and that it is only in union with God that the individual spirit can realize itself and become possessor of the latent wealth of intelligence and goodness that pertains to it. It is true, indeed, that there is something unique in the person of Christ, and that a participation in the being and life of God can be predicated of Him as distinguished from all other members of the human race. But, however true it may

It is from this consciousness that Christ is to be regarded as having spoken in His ministry. He did not speak as the naked Logos. He did not speak from a consciousness coëxtensive with the limitless being of the Logos and holding in clear light all that belongs to that being. He did not speak from a purely human consciousness. He spoke rather from a consciousness in which a sense of His human nature and condition was joined with a vision — and, it is to be presumed for at least a period, an enlarging vision — of what pertained to Him on the side of His divine nature. He knew Himself both as the Son of God and the Son of Man. His consciousness was, at least in a relative sense, a divine-human consciousness. It may be urged, doubtless, that it ought to be so construed in an unqualified sense before the christological problem can be regarded as properly solved. But, on the one hand, the fact that Christ confessed that the knowledge of the day of judgment lay beyond His province, and, on the other, the speculative difficulty of reconciling the mode of consciousness of the infinite Logos with that of a growing human subject stand in the way of conceiving a unitary consciousness, which had no limit on the divine side as well as being inclusive of all that pertained to the human side. Rather than deal violently with either datum, it is better to admit that it overtaxes human insight to construe complete personal unity in the divine-human Redeemer. This unity we have admitted to be the goal of christological construction. It should not be overlooked, however, that it is rather a philosophical predilection that directs our effort toward this goal than any distinct maxim or proposition of revelation.[1] No formal New Testa-

be that the relation of the divine and the human in the person of Christ transcends, in one sense, all earthly parallel, it must yet be a union of which by its very structure and essence humanity is capable." (John Caird, The Fundamental Ideas of Christianity, II. 158, 159.)

[1] Probably no theologian would care to challenge the propriety of pushing as far as possible toward this goal. It is to be observed, however, that one and

ment teaching obligates us to predicate a perfectly unitary consciousness in which are harmoniously combined all the divine and all the human activities of the Redeemer.

It may be thought that our line of representation gives, on the whole, a disproportionate weight to the human factor in Christ. But it is to be remembered that, while the divine is fundamental in the order of causation, in the line of revelation and of communication with the world the human factor has a foremost place; that before the divine thought could issue into the forms of human conception and human speech it had to be transported from the timeless order into that of creaturely succession, in other words, to be mediated in some sort to the human understanding in Christ; and that this mediation necessarily took place by stages. For these reasons, and also in deference to special facts in the gospel narratives, it has been concluded that the consciousness which was back of Christ's earthly doing and speech was predominantly human at the start, or in the days of childhood, but gradually, through influx from the divine side, received of the lofty contents which belonged to the consciousness of the preëxistent Logos. Much can be said for the conclusion that in the maturity of His earthly development the latter factor came to a relative ascendency. Sentences are on record which have a tone of divine royalty, and carry the impression that they issued from the consciousness of one who was, in rank and nature, truly the Son of God. Of a double consciousness no proper evidence is given in the New Testament. It is only as our thought re-

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another have found reasons for qualifying the demand for construing strict unity of consciousness in Christ. Thus James Orr says: "There is an immanent presence of God in nature, but there is also a transcendent existence of God beyond nature. So the divine Son took upon Him our nature with its human limits, but above and beyond that, if we may so express it, was the vast 'over-soul' of His divine consciousness. Even human psychology, in making us more familiar than we were with the idea of different strata of consciousness even in the same personal being, gives us a hint which need not be lost." (The Christian View of God and the World, p. 281. Compare H. C. Powell, The Principle of the Incarnation, pp. 170 ff.)

verts to what the Logos is in Himself and in relation to the other Persons of the Trinity—the eternal and essential mode of His being—that an area of consciousness incommensurate with that which we are authorized to affirm of the historical Christ is suggested.

That the effort to construe the relation of the divine and the human in Christ should be in a measure baffled is no cause for surprise. We are greatly taxed by the analogous task of reconciling the timeless life which belongs to God in Himself with an effective relation on His part to the world with its temporal order. Furthermore we meet a hard problem in our own relation to the divine. How the product can have a relative independence of the producer, how free persons can subsist together with God, we are puzzled to explain. But the deepest facts of our experience compel us to accept this order of relation to the divine as an indubitable verity. Now what reason have we for hoping to do in respect of the Christ what we cannot do fully in respect of ourselves. Supposing that this member of our race subsisted in a perfectly unique relation to the divine—a supposition which, as Lotze says,[1] is entirely admissible from a rational point of view—we simply make a sane response to the conditions in forbearing to expect clear insight into the mode of that relation. It may humble us as dogmatists thus to stop short of a solution of the christological problem. But as men of religious needs and aspirations we have small occasion to reckon our case as grievous. In spite of unfinished construction, a truth like that of the incarnation has for us great value. To meet in one historic personage both brother and Lord makes for us an ideal introduction to God and bond of fellowship with Him. An aspiring mysticism may indeed dream of a more immediate ascent to God; but it is apt to lose its way, and fails of that homelike feeling which belongs to divine fellowship of the most healthful type.

[1] Outlines of a Philosophy of Religion, pp. 149, 150.

The main results of our discussion may be summarized as follows: (1) Having postulated a finite human nature in Christ, we are not permitted in good logic to take this out of the plane of finitude and represent it as a bearer of divine or infinite attributes. (2) Having represented the Son of God as truly divine, and therefore, as possessed of the attributes which are proper to a necessary and immutable being, we cannot with rational consistency suppose those attributes to be laid aside or to be suppressed, so that their original subject may descend to the condition of the growing, the contingent, and the mutable. (3) Having assumed that a trinitarian life is an essential mode of the Godhead, we cannot consistently suppose one of the Divine Persons to undergo a metamorphosis which logically involves His recession from the Trinity or a reduced function therein. (4) While theology accepts the fact of a unique and incomparable union of the human and the divine in Christ, it has no means of clear insight into the mode of that union. It can reach at best only an approximate explication, and accordingly cannot properly stamp as dogma any hard and fast theory on the subject. At the close of all constructive effort in relation to christology the discreet thinker will be inclined to recall the remark of one of the early fathers, that the mystery of Christ's person is beyond human grasp, and very likely also "beyond the grasp of the entire creation of celestial powers." [1] Divine art is too fine and subtle for our analysis. No higher consummation of this art can be offered to our contemplation than the union of the divine and the human in Christ. Whatever may be the difficulty about reconciling them in the abstract formula, they are woven together most harmoniously in the concrete manifestation of the Redeemer. A magnificent sky, with its suggestions of infinite depths, could not be more perfectly mated with a beautiful and amiable landscape than is the divine with the human in the gospel picture of Christ.

[1] Origen, De Prin. II. 61.

A formal christological definition scarcely seems in place at this stage. If, however, it be demanded, let it be expressed in these terms: In Jesus Christ we contemplate the unique meeting-point of the human and the divine on the field of history — a being in whom the human and the divine subsist together in extraordinary and wonderful, but not unnatural, union.

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VI. — Design of the Incarnation.

In the New Testament the distinctive motive for the incarnation is undoubtedly set forth as the salvation of men. But the exclusive stress upon this motive may be explained by the fact that the Bible is specifically a book of salvation, and ignores rather than denies points of view which have no perceptible relation to its great theme. There is, accordingly, a place for any rational considerations which support the conclusion that the incarnation was a part of God's original scheme, and would have occurred even though man had not fallen. As one of the principal of these considerations, the truth has been urged that Christianity is the absolute religion, that the person of the God-man is central to Christianity, and that consequently the union of the Son of God with a human nature cannot consistently be made dependent upon the contingent facts of sin and the need of redemption. To this argument the thought may be added, that the salvation of men from sin cannot be regarded as the ultimate aim, but rather as the antecedent to an eternal kingdom of righteousness, and that of this holy fellowship the perfectly suitable bond and centre is one who unites in himself the divine and the creaturely natures. Reasons of so much cogency as these may at least make us tolerant of the supposition that the incarnation did not hinge upon man's apostasy, though its relation to the redemptive work ought to be for us, as for the sacred writers, the theme of largest and most grateful contemplation.

Only reason Son of God became man was that He might redeem us from sin (Curtis)

CHAPTER II.

THE WORK OF CHRIST, ESPECIALLY IN THE PHASE OF RECONCILIATION OR ATONEMENT.

I. — A General Glance at the Offices of Christ.

The great factors in the Jewish communion — the kingly, the priestly, and the prophetical — served as means for projecting the Messianic ideal. New Testament thought, therefore, was flowing into prepared molds when it represented Christ as king, prophet, and priest. This representation too, was happily descriptive of Christ's work as it must ever appear in a comprehensive glance.

While the threefold distinction in Christ's offices is in no wise artificial, it can easily be pushed into artificiality by being overdrawn. The distinction does not imply that one stage in the Redeemer's life was wholly devoted to one office, and another stage to a different office. Indeed, the three offices may be discerned in a single act or event. Thus the death of Christ was at once kingly, prophetical, and priestly. It was kingly since it was accompanied by the consciousness that no man had power to take away His life, whereas it belonged to His sovereignty to lay it down and to take it up again; it was prophetical as conveying a supreme lesson in religious truth; and it was priestly as being a sacrifice for the remission of sins. In general, it may be said that the three offices are continually coming to manifestation in the New Testament record, though in some passages one is more conspicuous than another.

The imagination more easily attaches the kingly character to the ascended Christ than to the Son of Man who was despised and rejected of men, and who testified of Himself that He had not where to lay His head. It looks sooner to the plane of the Apocalyptic visions for tokens of kingship than to the simple narratives of the Gospels. Nevertheless, it requires no searching scrutiny to discover kingly lineaments in Christ as He trod the path of His earthly ministry. In the authoritative tone of His speech, in the dignity of His silence before accusers, in the calm assurance with which He held forth the loftiest blessings to His followers, in the hush of winds and waves before His rebuke, in His mastery over disease and death, in His clothing of apostles with powers of administration, in His establishment of ordinances to be perpetually observed, in His assertion of the prerogative to forgive sins, in His requirement that every relationship, whether of father, mother, sister, or brother, should be subordinated to loyal devotion to Himself — in all these things His essential royalty was revealed. Even in His lowest humiliation the kingly character was not denied, for humiliation itself was with Him a means of assured victory. He knew that by being nailed to the cross His hand would be prepared for limitless dominion over the hearts of men. Those who apprehend the true relation between love and sovereignty will not regard Him as less regal in dying than in the act of raising the dead and judging the gathered nations.

The revelation of Christ's kingly character may be regarded as an element in the perfection of His prophetical office, or teaching function. To disclose the King was to make known, in virtue of essential correspondence, the highest and best respecting the kingdom. In so far, then, as the kingdom of God was the great theme of prophecy, the aim of prophetical discourse was most perfectly fulfilled when Christ came and mirrored in His person the principles of divine rule.

The plane of Christ's prophetical office was evidently far

higher than that occupied by any of the preceding prophets. They spoke as servants to whom the Supreme Master had in some part revealed His purposes. Christ spoke as the Son of the house, to whom the counsels of divine wisdom and grace were fully known. They spoke as heralds and forerunners. Christ spoke as the personal fulfillment of their highest presentiments and anticipations. Their principal theme was above and beyond themselves. Christ's theme was in no small degree His own person and work, for therein lay that which was of most consequence for men to know.

As regards the predictive element, it was distinctive of Christ's prophetical vocation that His character and experiences, no less than His words, cast a clear light upon the future. His foiling of the tempter, His overcoming the world, the ethical perfection of His manhood, His unclouded communion with the Father, His resurrection and glorification constitute together a most vivid and effective picture of the possibilities and certainties of human destiny. To view the Redeemer in any one of these respects is to read a luminous prophecy.

There is New Testament warrant for connecting the prophetical office of Christ with other regions than the earthly. Very little indeed is said about His preaching in the place of departed spirits; but the few verses that can be cited upon the subject fairly imply that the fact of such preaching was recognized in apostolic thinking. In spite of earnest efforts, on the part of exegetes and dogmatists, to overcome this implication, it still adheres to these sentences of Peter: "Christ also suffered for sins once, the righteous for the unrighteous, that He might bring us to God; being put to death in the flesh, but quickened in the spirit; in which also He went and preached unto the spirits in prison, which aforetime were disobedient, when the long-suffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing. . . . Unto this end was the gospel preached even to the dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according

to God in the spirit."[1] The being judged according to men in the flesh is reasonably taken as equivalent to undergoing sentence of death, so that the meaning of the clause amounts to this: in order that they, having undergone judgment in the experience of bodily death, may in spirit be alive. The sense in which the terms "flesh" and "spirit" are to be taken here (iv. 6) is unambiguous; these terms evidently put in contrast the sensuous and the supersensuous nature of man. Now the same terms occur above (iii. 19), and the apparent connection between the two instances in the thought of the apostle favors the conclusion that the terms express the same antithesis in the one case as in the other; that is, that the spirit in which Christ went and preached to the spirits in prison is not to be regarded as the Holy Spirit, but as His pneumatic nature which, notwithstanding the death of the body, was still vital and the means of an active ministry. This conclusion is also sustained by the order of the clauses, which naturally suggests that the preaching took place after and in spite of the destruction of the flesh. It is indeed somewhat strange that Peter should represent the preaching as being directed to a particular group among the dead. But the enigma is not helped appreciably if, counter to the suggestion of the connected verses, we put living antediluvians in place of the dead, and suppose that Christ's preaching to the former was effected through the agency of the Holy Spirit. Peter's reason for limiting the preaching to a special party still requires explanation. Surely Christ was preaching to disobedient men, through His inspired ministers, in all the centuries covered by Jewish prophecy. Why then, did the apostle limit his reference to a particular group of sinners? If it be said that he wished to bring in a mention of the flood to illustrate the office of baptism (iii. 20, 21), and went somewhat aside for this purpose, it is to be answered: Very possibly this is true; but in that

[1] 1 Pet. iii. 18–20, iv. 6.

event he had just the same occasion to limit the scope of the preaching, whether he regarded its subjects as the spirits of the dead or as living men. The very fact that he calls them "spirits" (πνεύματα) is adverse to the supposition that they were regarded as living men at the time of the preaching. Moreover, an objection to throwing back the preaching to the eve of the flood is found in the connection of the word "aforetime" (ποτέ) with the disobedience of the party in question, rather than with the preaching to them, as though the two events were separated by an interval of time.

Among the earlier Lutheran divines there was a tendency to regard Christ's descent into Hades as a means of signalizing His triumph over death and Satan. But this view exceeds the scriptural representation, which makes note only of the prophetical function of preaching in the region of the dead.

It is not at all fanciful to suppose that in a direct sense the prophetical office of Christ is fulfilled in heaven, His divine-human person being a medium of continuous illustration and revelation of the highest and holiest truth. That in an indirect sense He still fulfills the prophetical office is plainly implied by His declaration respecting the promised Comforter: "When He, the Spirit of truth is come, He shall guide you into all the truth; for He shall not speak from Himself; but what things soever He shall hear, these shall He speak; and He shall declare unto you the things that are to come. He shall glorify me: for He shall take of mine, and shall declare it unto you."[1]

While the work of Christ had a certain redemptive efficacy in its kingly and prophetical character, it had also a special virtue as an antidote to sin which is not suggested by either of these terms, a virtue which is described only as Christ is named the great High Priest of humanity. This is a proposi-

[1] John xvi. 13, 14.

tion which only needs to be stated here, since its proof and illustration belong to the general aim of the present chapter.

The summit of Christ's priestly vocation was reached in His sacrifice upon the cross ; but we see there neither its beginning nor its end. The burden of His sacrificial office was upon His spirit long before the shedding of His blood, and though in one sense His sacrifice was accomplished once for all, it is perpetually memorialized by His presence in heaven. The divine glance, so to speak, cannot reach to the ill desert of sinners or imperfect believers upon the earth without first resting upon Him who died for them. Accordingly, in the pictorial language of the sacred writer He is described as ever living to make intercession for them that draw near unto God through Him.[1] This is much the same as saying that His presence in the nature which was the medium of His passion perpetually memorializes before the throne of judgment and justice the great sacrifice which He accomplished in behalf of men in the time of His humiliation.

The thought lies very near at hand that no one of the three offices of Christ can be neglected without prejudicial results. The Church which forgets the kingly office of its Head is likely to be wanting in victorious confidence, while the Church which occupies its thought mainly with this office is liable to gravitate toward an unethical exaltation of power, and to be too accessible to the temptations of hierarchical pride and assumption. To lay the whole stress upon the prophetical or teaching function, to the slighting of the sacrificial, involves an inadequate education of the consciousness of sin, and results in a feebler sense of dependence upon Christ than ought, for his own good, to characterize the redeemed man. A Church that confines itself to this point of view will, in the long run, exhibit a type of religion which is lacking in depth and vitality of incentive. On the other hand, to neglect Christ as king

[1] Heb. vii. 25.

and enlightener, and to rest in an exclusive way upon His priestly mediation, tends to an insufficient regard for the demands of practical activity, not to say, to an antinomian lassitude. A Church which knows its vocation to bring in the divine kingdom, and has the needful disposition for fulfilling that vocation, will keep close to Christ as king, as prophet, and as priest.

II. — Canons for Interpreting the Scriptural References to the Work of Atonement or Reconcilation.

In attempting a closer view of Christ's priestly mediation, that is, of His work of reconcilation or atonement, it is appropriate, first of all, to give some heed to principles of interpretation.[1]

As respects the Old Testament, it is quite evident that we ought to be cautious about reading into it conceptions which belong to the advanced ground of New Testament thought. Some place may indeed be given to the well-established presupposition that the Old Testament system reaches in general in the direction of the new dispensation, so that it is conceivable that some light may be reflected back from the more developed teaching in the latter. Still, in consideration of a possible advance to improved, not to say entirely new, points of view, a determination of Old Testament doctrine in this connection should rest mainly upon an analysis and comparison of its own contents.

In order to gain from the examination a serviceable basis of dogmatic construction, it is of importance to note both the main elements in the significance of the sacrificial ritual of

[1] The use of the terms reconciliation and atonement interchangeably may be regarded as a token that we employ the latter in its broader significance. In this sense anything intrinsically suited and directed to the removing of obstacles to unity or fellowship may be styled a means of atonement.

the Old Testament and the extent to which that ritual can be regarded as a genuine medium for revealing fundamental truth, and not merely as an accidental and temporary instrument of religious discipline or edification.

On the first of these points enough divergence of views has occurred to indicate that the subject is not quite so transparent as has sometimes been assumed. Even so general a question as whether the sacrificial system emphasized man's standing and character as that of a sinner before God, needing protection against the consequences of his sins, has not called forth a perfectly unanimous judgment. According to Ritschl, the Old Testament idea is that man simply in his creaturely character, his essential feebleness and transitoriness, cannot endure the greatness of God, and so needs some defense when he comes into His majestic presence. The sacrifices provided what was apprehended to be such a defense, a shield to men in their creaturely infirmity and not specially in their character as trangressors. A reference to sin-defilement, it is true, cannot be denied to certain orders of sacrifices, namely, the sin and trespass offerings, but the reference here is rather to impurity in the Levitical sense than to sin proper.[1]

This view, however, is little adapted to carry conviction. While it is true that the sacrificial system did not assume to apply to the more heinous offenses, no atonement being contemplated for sins which were described as committed with a "high hand," it is contrary to the evidence not to give that system, as a whole, a very positive association with the exigencies created by sin and guilt before God. The ethical intensity, which is certainly characteristic of the Old Testament, does not allow the notion of God's holiness proper to recede, so much as Ritschl's theory supposes, behind that of His overpowering greatness. A more specific objection to

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[1] Die Christliche Lehre von der Rechtfertigung und Versöhnung, Band II. Kap. iii.

the theory is found in the peculiarities of the sacrificial appointments and the general use of the term which is selected to describe the aim or effect of sacrifice. On these grounds, Riehm contends, and it seems to us successfully, that the character in man which the sacrificial system contemplates is not that of mere creaturely weakness and transitoriness, but preëminently, if not exclusively, that of sin-defilement. "Only on the presupposition," he says, "valid for the whole sacrificial system, of the presence of sin-defilement, is the fact explained that on greater sacrificial occasions, when different kinds of offerings are rendered in conjunction with one another, there is always at the same time a sin-offering presented; that further the burnt-offering in certain cases serves as a supplement to the sin-offering, and so has part in its design.[1] . . . Also in 1 Sam. iii. 14, it is presupposed that the protecting covering which is afforded in the sacrificial institution has to do in general with security against the consequences of offenses. Moreover, how could כִּפֶּר (to make atonement), in its application apart from divine worship, have undeniably such a thoroughly dominant reference to sin and guilt, if that sense was foreign to the same in its application to divine worship, or was only a side meaning added, especially in connection with the sin and trespass offerings, to its proper significance?"[2]

Holding then that the sacrificial system, in general, mirrored man's standing as a sinner, or impure being, in need of protection before the holy God, we have to inquire how the system was regarded in Old Testament thought as meeting this need. It is not unnatural to suppose that the devotement of the sacrificial victims to death was accounted a means of expiation.

[1] Lev. v. 10, xii. 7, 8, xv. 15, 30; Num. vii. 11; Lev. xiv. 19, 20; Num. xv. 24, 25, viii. 12, 21.

[2] Altestamentliche Theologie, pp. 131, 132. Compare August Dillmann, Handbuch der altestamentlichen Theologie, pp. 465–474; Hermann Schultz, Old Testament Theology, I. 373–400. Note among additional biblical references, Lev. iv. 20, 26, 31, 35, v. 6, vi. 1–7, x. 17; Num. xvi. 46–48; 2 Sam. xxi. 3; Heb. ix. 22.

Death appears as the special penalty which was denounced against sin at the beginning, so that the slaying of the victims would seem aptly to typify that they took the doom which belonged to the offerers. Moreover, the act of the offerers, in laying their hands upon the heads of the victims just before they were slain, might be regarded as implying that they were thus made the bearers of the ill-desert which the sacrificial rites were designed to cover. But this inference fails of adequate confirmation in the Old Testament representations. The death of the victims appears there not so much the proper means of atonement as its necessary antecedent. A survey of the whole list of passages which speak of making atonement by sacrifices cannot fail to enforce the impression that this was conceived to consist not so much in the act of slaying as in the use which was made of the freshly slain victims, and especially of their blood in the further prosecution of the sacrificial rite.[1] The measure of significance which was attached to the laying of hands upon the victims is well expressed by Oehler: "The offerer, by the laying on of hands, appoints the animal to be for him a medium and vehicle of atonement, thanks, or supplication, according to the designation of the offering with which at the time he wishes to appear before God. . . . The act of atonement at the offering, with which the specific priestly functions begin, commences not with the shedding of blood, but with the use of the shed blood."[2]

It does not appear that atoning virtue was associated exclusively with the shed blood, as presented before the face of the Lord; for, instances are recorded in which atonement is said to be made by means of unbloody sacrifices.[3] But these instances

[1] Ex. xxix. 33, 36, xxx. 10–16; Lev. i. 4; iv. 20–25, v. 6–19, vi. 30, vii. 7, viii. 34, ix. 7–11, x. 17, xii. 7, 8, xiv. 18–21, 29, 31, 49–53, xv. 15, 30, xvi. 6–20, xvii. 11, xix. 22, xxiii. 27, 28; Num. v. 8, vi. 11, viii. 12. xv. 25, 28, xvi. 46, 47, xxv. 13, xxviii, 22, 30, xxix. 5, 11, xxxi. 50; 1 Chron. vi. 49; 2 Chron. xxix. 24; Ezek. xlv. 15, 17.

[2] Theology of the Old Testament, § 126.

[3] Lev. v. 11–13; Num. xvi. 46, 47.

are exceptional, the unbloody offerings generally standing in a subordinate relation to the bloody or presupposing their performance. The general cast of the sacrificial ritual emphasizes the idea that atoning virtue, or power to cover sins, resides especially in the shed blood.

The reason for attributing special virtue to the shed blood is indicated in only one passage, namely, Lev. xvii. 11, where it is said, "The life of the flesh is in the blood: and I have given it to you upon the altar to make atonement for your souls; for it is the shed blood that maketh atonement by reason of the life." That is, the blood flowing warm from the victim was regarded as the bearer of its life. Viewed in this character it appeared at once as the most precious thing which the world afforded below the plane of man, and also emblematic of man's life or soul. In presenting it, sin-defiled men invited the divine glance to rest upon a gift intrinsically precious and akin to their own life-principle, a gift which might check the severe scrutiny of God against their ill-desert and avert His judgment from their souls. In other words, it was fitted to give visible form to the idea of atonement, that is, of a protecting covering before God: for to cover is the root idea of the Hebrew word which is rendered into English by "making atonement" (כָּפַר).

While the sacrificial victim was in a sense man's gift to God, its virtue was not by any means regarded as determined by its cost to the offerer. In the prophetical writings the idea is abundantly scorned that the favor or clemency of Jehovah can be gained by mere commercial values.[1] The appointments of the ceremonial law also indicate that the cost to the offerer was a very subordinate consideration where atonement was in view, since the sacrifices, like the sin-offerings, in which the idea of atonement was specially prominent, consisted generally of a single victim, and were a very slight tax upon the resources

[1] Ps. l. 8–15; Isa. i. 10–19; Jer. vi. 20, xiv. 12; Amos v. 22.

of the rich. The virtue of the sacrifice lay rather in the intrinsic and emblematic worth of the life-bearing blood and the gracious destination of the same, on the part of God, to the office of atonement. The latter is to be regarded as the ultimate foundation or effective source of sacrificial virtue, the life-bearing blood being chosen because of its congruous relation to the idea of atonement, or its fitness to impress upon the Israelites, by a visible lesson, truths which they needed to keep ever in mind respecting the holy God and His relations to men. The language of Lev. xvii. 11 is rather in line than otherwise with this point of view; for the gracious determination of God is there specified as that which is back of the atoning rite, Jehovah saying of the sacrificial blood, "I have given it to you upon the altar to make atonement for your souls."

The more essential points in the sacrificial ritual may then be summarized as follows: (1) It emphasized the ill-desert of sinful men and the impossibility of their justifying themselves before God. (2) It showed that God was gracious, and was disposed to bring men into fellowship with Himself, notwithstanding the barriers which their sins interposed. (3) It revealed that the chosen method of grace with God was one giving emphasis to the claims of the divine holiness, along with the extension of clemency to the ill-deserving.

This significance cannot be regarded as seriously abated by the fact that in one and another connection divine indulgence and favor seem to be elicited by other means than the sacrificial.[1] That God's promises to the fathers should be exhibited as a ground of forbearance, that an office should be conceded to friendly intercession, that the indispensableness and virtue of inward repentance should be emphasized — all these things show only that sacrifices are not to be regarded as the whole of the divine economy in relation to Israel; they do not deny that

[1] Ex. xxxii. 11–14; Lev. xxvi. 40–45; 2 Kings xiii. 23; Ps. li. 16, 17, lxxix. 9, 10, cvi. 23; Isa. xliii. 25, xlviii. 9, 10, lv. 7; Jer. v. 1.

the sacrificial ritual had a high significance and subserved an important function.

From another side, however, the question may arise as to whether the dogmatic significance of the sacrificial system must not be regarded as quite seriously abated. Biblical criticism, it is said, shows that this system was the result of progressive development, and that the completing stage was not reached till a comparatively late date in the history of Israel. How then, it may be asked, are we to know that the system was not so largely accidental as to have little or none of the worth which belongs to an authentic medium of divine truth?

The response to this question lies very largely in the considerations which have been given in the chapter on revelation. On the one hand, it may be conceded that in the vivid religious dialect of the Hebrews things were often referred to the direct agency of God, where the warrant for the reference was not so much His express command of the things in question as the undoubting conviction that they were agreeable to His will; and that, accordingly, we are not debarred from supposing that human discretion was no inconsiderable factor in shaping the details of the sacrificial ritual. But, on the other hand, the evidence of a divine vocation in the Old Testament religion as a whole, the dependence of its value upon a due balance of different elements, and its prophetical character, the anticipatory relation to New Testament truth which is bespoken for it in the references of Christ and the apostles, compel the conclusion that a factor so prominent as the sacrificial system, and so interwoven with the life and thought of Israel, was at least in its more essential features thoroughly in the providential order, a means chosen of God for the tuition of Israel and for the instruction of men to the end of time. Stress upon minute particulars may be quite unwarranted, but it is not arbitrary to see through the drapery of the sacrificial ritual as much truth as has been summarized in the three particulars mentioned above.

The conclusion that the sacrificial system of the Old Testament is neither to be ignored as a mere human product, nor to be taken in the spirit of stringent technicality and literalism, furnishes the canon for interpreting the New Testament sacrificial language, or its dialect of atonement. The propriety of taking the former in a broad rather than in a stringent way argues decidedly for the propriety of taking the latter in the same way. For, the New Testament writers came to the treatment of Christian themes with minds well filled with the altar images of the Old Testament. In popular imaginative language, discourse addressed quite as much to religious feeling as to sheer intellect, these images could hardly fail to be forthcoming. Apt vehicles they were for the truths of the new dispensation. But they did not come from the workshop of a precise logic. As the originals from which they were borrowed, the Old Testament institutions of sacrifice, furnish a permanent lesson rather in their general character and trend than in the minutiæ of ritual prescription, so in the New Testament application of these images essential truth is to be sought more in the general bearing of particulars than in individual items. Being thus taken in the broad, they evidently permit that, in connection with the data which they afford, much account should be made of the general points of view supplied by reason and revelation.

III. — Points Respecting Atonement Which Are Fairly Established by the Contents of Scripture.

In an effort to reach the essential import of the New Testament references to the subject of atonement an aid may be rendered by a classification of passages. The following grouping, it is believed, will serve to direct attention to the more important aspects.

1. The sufferings and death of Christ are not represented

as being accidental, but, on the contrary, as part of the scheme set on foot by divine wisdom and grace for the salvation of men. Both in the words of Christ and in the apostolic references they are described as matters of forecast and beneficent design.

"The Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister and to give His life a ransom for many." [1]

"I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straitened till it be accomplished." [2]

"He said unto them, Thus it is written that the Christ should suffer, and rise again from the dead the third day." [3]

"As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up: that whosoever believeth may in Him have eternal life." [4]

"I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd layeth down His life for the sheep. . . . Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I may take it again. No one taketh it away from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received from my Father." [5]

"Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father save me from this hour. But for this cause came I unto this hour." [6]

"We behold Him who hath been made a little lower than the angels, even Jesus, because of the suffering of death crowned with glory and honor, that by the grace of God He should taste death for every man. For it became Him, for whom are all things, and through whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the author of their salvation perfect through sufferings." [7]

"Since then the children are sharers in flesh and blood, He also Himself in like manner partook of the same; that

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[1] Matt. xx. 28. [3] Luke xxiv. 46. [5] John x. 11, 17, 18. [7] Heb. ii. 9, 10.
[2] Luke xii. 50. [4] John iii. 14, 15. [6] John xii. 27.

through death He might bring to naught him that had the power of death, that is, the devil." [1]

2. The sufferings of Christ, His death, and His shed blood are represented as being for sinners, or directed to the end of taking away sins.

"He took bread, and when he had given thanks He brake it, and gave to them saying, This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me. And the cup in like manner after supper, saying, This cup is the new covenant in my blood, even that which is poured out for you. . . . The bread which I will give is my flesh, for the life of the world." [2]

"While we were yet weak, in due season Christ died for the ungodly. . . . God commendeth His own love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." [3]

"What the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and as an offering for sin condemned sin in the flesh." [4]

"He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not also with Him freely give us all things?" [5]

"I delivered unto you first of all that which also I received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures." [6]

"We thus judge, that one died for all, therefore all died: and He died for all, that they which live should no longer live unto themselves but unto Him who for their sakes died and rose again." [7]

"Him who knew no sin He made to be sin on our behalf; that we might become the righteousness of God in Him." [8]

"Our Lord Jesus Christ, who gave Himself for our sins,

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[1] Heb. ii. 14. See also Heb. ix. 26; Acts viii. 32–35; Rom. viii. 32; 1 John iv. 10.

[2] Luke xxii. 19, 20; John vi. 51.

[3] Rom. v. 6, 8.

[4] Rom. viii. 3.

[5] Rom. viii. 32.

[6] 1 Cor. xv. 3.

[7] 2 Cor. v. 14, 15.

[8] 2 Cor. v. 21.

that He might deliver us out of this present evil world, according to the will of our God and Father." [1]

"God appointed us not unto wrath, but unto the obtaining of salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with Him." [2]

"Inasmuch as it is appointed unto men once to die, and after this cometh judgment; so Christ also, having been once offered to bear the sins of many, shall appear a second time apart from sin, to them that wait for Him, unto salvation." [3]

"Who His own self bare our sins in His body upon the tree, that we, having died unto sins, might live unto righteousness; by whose stripes ye were healed." [4]

"I saw, and behold a great multitude which no man could number, out of every nation, and of all tribes and peoples and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, arrayed in white robes, and palms in their hands. . . . And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, These which are arrayed in white robes, who are they, and whence came they? And I say unto him, My lord, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they which came out of the great tribulation, and they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb." [5]

3. Christ is described as a high priest, and His sufferings and death are represented as sacrificial.

"He seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold, the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." [6]

"It behoved Him in all things to be made like unto His brethren, that He might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people." [7]

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[1] Gal. i. 4. [2] 1 Thess. v. 9, 10. [3] Heb. ix. 27, 28. [4] 1 Pet. ii. 24.

[5] Rev. vii. 9, 13, 14. See also Matt. xxvi. 28; Rom. iv. 25; Gal. ii. 20; Heb. ii. 9, 14, 15; 1 Pet. iii. 18; Rev. i. 5, 6; Isa. liii. 4–6, 10–12.

[6] John i. 29. [7] Heb. ii. 17.

"Purge out the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, even as ye are unleavened. For our passover also hath been sacrificed, even Christ." [1]

"Walk in love, even as Christ also loved you, and gave Himself up for us, an offering and a sacrifice, to God for an odor of a sweet smell." [2]

"Having therefore, brethen, boldness to enter into the holy place by the blood of Jesus, by the way which He dedicated for us, a new and living way, through the veil, that is to say, His flesh; and having a great priest over the house of God; let us draw near with a true heart in fulness of faith." [3]

"According to the law, I may almost say, all things are cleansed with blood, and apart from shedding of blood there is no remission. It was necessary, therefore, that the copies of the things in the heavens should be cleansed with these; but the heavenly things with better sacrifices than these. For Christ entered not into a holy place made with hands, like in pattern to the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear before the face of God for us: nor yet that He should offer Himself often; as the high priest entereth into the holy place year by year with blood not his own; else must He often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once at the end of the ages hath He been manifested to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself." [4]

4. The sacrificial work of Christ which was consummated in His death is set forth as a ground of forgiveness or reconciliation.

"This is my blood of the covenant, which is shed for many unto remission of sins." [5]

"Be it known unto you that through this man is proclaimed unto you remission of sins; and by Him everyone that be-

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[1] 1 Cor. v. 7. [2] Eph. v. 2. [3] Heb. x. 19–22

[4] Heb. ix. 22–26. See also Eph. v. 25; Heb. iv. 14, vii. 26, x. 12–14, xiii. 12; Rev. vii. 13, 14.

[5] Matt. xxvi. 28.

lieveth is justified from all things, from which ye could no be justified by the law of Moses." [1]

"If, while we were enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, being reconciled, shall we be saved by His life; and not only so, but we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have received the reconciliation." [2]

"So then as through one trespass the judgment came unto all men to condemnation: even so through one act of righteousness the free gift came unto all men to justification of life. For as through the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners; even so through the obedience of the one shall the many be made righteous." [3]

"In whom we have our redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of His grace." [4]

"Now in Christ Jesus ye that once were far off are made nigh in the blood of Christ." [5]

"And you, being in time past alienated and enemies in your mind in your evil works, yet now hath He reconciled in the body of His flesh through death, to present you holy and without blemish and irreproachable before Him." [6]

5. Christ is represented as being given or offered as a means of redemption.

"Take heed unto yourself to feed the Church of God, which He purchased with His own blood." [7]

"Ye are not your own; for ye were bought with a price. . . . Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us; for it is written, cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree." [8]

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[1] Acts xiii. 38, 39.
[2] Rom. v. 10, 11.
[3] Rom. v. 18, 19.
[4] Eph. i. 7.
[5] Eph. ii. 13.
[6] Col. i. 21, 22. See also John iii. 14–18; Acts x. 43; 1 Thess. v. 9, 10.
[7] Acts xx. 28.
[8] 1 Cor. vi. 19; Gal. iii. 13.

"Giving thanks unto the Father . . . who delivered us out of the power of darkness, and translated us into the kingdom of the Son of His love; in whom we have our redemption, the forgiveness of our sins."[1]

"There is one God, one mediator also between God and men, Himself man, Christ Jesus, who gave Himself a ransom for all."[2]

"Looking for the blessed hope and appearing of the glory of our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ; who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity."[3]

"Christ having come a high priest of the good things to come, through the greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this creation, nor yet through the blood of goats and calves, but through His own blood, entered in once for all into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption."[4]

"Knowing that you were redeemed, not with corruptible things, with silver and gold, from your vain manner of life handed down from your fathers; but with precious blood, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot, even the blood of Christ."[5]

"And they sing a new song, saying, Worthy art thou to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and didst purchase unto God with thy blood men of every tribe, and people, and nation, and madest them to be unto our God a kingdom and priests."[6]

6. Christ is described as being, through His shed blood, a propitiation for sins.

"Being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: whom God set forth to be a propitiation, through faith, by His blood, to shew His righteousness,

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[1] Col. i. 13, 14.
[2] 1 Tim. ii. 5, 6.
[3] Titus ii. 13, 14.
[4] Heb. ix. 11, 12.
[5] 1 Pet. i. 18, 19.
[6] Rev. v. 9, 10. See also Matt. xx. 28; Eph. i. 6, 7; Rom. iii. 23–24.

because of the passing over of the sins done aforetime, in the forbearance of God; for the shewing, I say, of His righteousness at this present season: that He might Himself be just, and the justifier of him that hath faith in Jesus." [1]

"If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: and He is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the whole world." [2]

7. Christ's mediation is represented as necessary to salvation.

"Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." [3]

"In none other is there salvation; for neither is there any other name under heaven, that is given among men, wherein we must be saved." [4]

"Other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ." [5]

8. Christ's mediation is represented as the procuring cause of all positive spiritual benefits, such as the gracious aid of the Holy Spirit, sonship toward God, and eternal life.

"The Comforter, even the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, He shall teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I have said unto you." [6]

"This Jesus did God raise up, whereof we all are witnesses. Being, therefore, by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, He hath poured forth this, which ye see and hear." [7]

"As many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the children of God, even to them that believe on His name." [8]

"He that believeth on the Son hath eternal life; but he

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[1] Rom. iii. 24–26.
[2] 1 John ii. 1, 2. See also Heb. ii. 17.
[3] John xiv. 6.
[4] Acts iv. 12.
[5] 1 Cor. iii. 11. See also 1 Tim. ii. 5.
[6] John xiv. 26.
[7] Acts ii. 32, 33.
[8] John i. 12.

that obeyeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him." [1]

"The wages of sin is death; but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord." [2]

"The witness is this, that God gave unto us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He that hath the Son hath the life; he that hath not the Son of God hath not the life." [3]

"Of Him are ye in Christ Jesus, who was made unto us wisdom from God, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." [4]

"Since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive." [5]

"We are His workmanship created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God afore prepared that we should walk in them." [6]

"Having been made perfect, He became unto all them that obey Him the author of eternal salvation." [7]

9. Christ's mediatorial work is represented as strongly attesting God's love.

"God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish, but have eternal life." [8]

"Herein was the love of God manifested in us, that God hath sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins." [9]

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[1] John iii. 36.

[2] Rom. vi. 23.

[3] 1 John v. 11, 12.

[4] 1 Cor. i. 30.

[5] 1 Cor. xv. 21, 22.

[6] Eph. ii. 10.

[7] Heb. v. 9. See also John vi. 40, 51, xvi. 7, xvii. 2; Rom. v. 20, 21, x. 4; Eph. i. 3–5, v. 25–27.

[8] John iii. 16.

[9] 1 John iv. 9, 10. See also Rom. v. 6–8, viii. 32, 38, 39.

A glance at the foregoing analysis will reveal that an essential community of thought on the work of Christ is characteristic of the great majority of New Testament books. One aspect may be more prominent in the references of one writer than in those of another; but most points of view are illustrated in the different writings or groups of writings.

A second thing which is made clearly manifest is, that there is no warrant for drawing a contrast between the Father and the Son, as though the one, rather than the other, stood on the side of grace. It is an unbiblical imagination which identifies the Father with law and justice, and the Son with the pitying love which tones down the demands of law and justice. No such notion appears with the sacred writers. On the contrary, it is their repeated representation that the whole redemptive mission of Christ was founded in and illustrative of the compassion and love of God. If it is said that the Son suffered and died for men, it is said also that the Father spared not His own Son, but gave Him up in behalf of men. Not to spare His Son was not to spare Himself. The bond of love between them makes real disjunction as respects self-sacrifice inconceivable.

An inappropriate antithesis between the Father and the Son is sometimes introduced by an exaggerating interpretation of the anguished exclamation of Christ upon the cross, "My God, why hast thou forsaken me!" A shadow of mystery, it must be conceded, hangs over these words. While they serve to heighten the aspect of tragedy, and in that sense were congruous with the scene of the crucifixion, they are not just the words that we should expect to hear from the lips of the innocent sufferer. But between two difficulties it behoves us to chose the lesser; and it certainly involves less difficulty to suppose that something of hyperbole was put into a brief exclamation of the dying Christ, than to suppose that the Father assumed an artificial attitude toward the Son of His love. If God darkened His face toward the Son upon the

cross, He put on an appearance counter to the reality; for, beyond all question, the Son was never more perfectly an object of His complacent love than at this climax of self-devotement. The Son on His part, if still in the actual exercise of His unique knowledge of the Father, must be supposed to have seen through any mere mask, or appearance, to the reality. Should it be said that His great agony clouded over for the moment His vision of the reality, it may be replied: Very true; but on this supposition the exclamation of the crucified one is sufficiently explained apart from any change of attitude, any retreat or appearance of indifference, on the side of the Father. This we believe to be by far the preferable interpretation, namely, that which refers the temporary shadow, not to the Father's choice and action, but rather to the anguished soul and deeply wounded sensibility of the Son. The alternative interpretation goes quite too far in representing the Father as acting a theatrical part. A little before He had sent an angel to strengthen the Son, and was known to be ready to send legions of angels if they should be called for. Just afterwards, in the conception of the Son Himself, He stood ready to receive His spirit with fatherly tenderness. Is it to be imagined that He shifted His attitude back and forth thus suddenly? Far better to suppose that the words of the ancient psalm (xxii. 1) came spontaneously into the mind of Christ as the maximum expression of anguish afforded by human speech, and were thus appropriated to sigh forth His own deep distress — a distress which at its acme quenched the comforting sense of the Father's presence rather than in strictness the conviction of His continued favor. The borrowed exclamation may be construed as meaning, O my God, behold how this flood of darkness and distress submerges my soul, even to the quenching of the cheering sense of thy presence!

Another thing which is apparent from a glance at the scriptural passages is, that the sacred writers were much more con-

cerned to emphasize the truth that Christ has been constituted the medium or channel of saving benefits, than to set forth the precise way in which those benefits were conditioned upon His work, or the necessary connection between the two. The former can be read by one who runs. It shines with noon-day brightness from the pages of the Gospels and Epistles. A well-grounded confidence respecting the latter needs to be preceded by a very careful examination and induction. Indeed, scholars of no mean insight have concluded that the fundamental grounds and relations of Christ's work are best left in the field of acknowledged mysteries. But, while we confess that there is danger of presumption, we are not convinced that the intimations of Scripture are too scanty to justify an attempt to frame a theory of atonement.

On one important point only a moderate amount of scriptural testimony can be regarded as demanded. It is so much the dictate of reason that suffering by itself cannot be an end with God or have any worth in His sight, that we do not need the warrant of repeated declarations to justify the conclusion that the value of Christ's sufferings lay rather in the ethical will which they manifested than in the quantum of pain which they comprised. Accordingly, in the absence of anything of a contrary tenor, we may take in their full breadth Paul's representations that the death upon the cross was the culmination of Christ's holy obedience, and that this costly obedience is to be viewed as the chief element in atoning virtue.[1] This point of view gives an ethical worth to suffering, as testing and manifesting a sacred devotion to righteousness, and apprises us that the peculiar stress upon the death of Christ does not isolate its meaning from that of His life. We are at liberty to regard the holy, obedient will of Christ, whether viewed as paying tribute to righteousness or working out the dictates of love, as the central factor in the worth of His

[1] Phil. ii. 8; Rom. v. 18, 19.

earthly ministry, and as running through the whole of that ministry, though in brief rhetorical references, like those of the New Testament writers, it is natural to put the stress upon the culminating phase.[1]

In relation to a second important point it is proper to ask for a somewhat larger basis in revelation. We refer to the question, whether or not an objective bearing is to be attributed to Christ's work; whether it is to be regarded as in some sense a condition, on the divine side, of man's recovery, or as being simply a means of salutary influence upon men.

Not a few passages, it is to be conceded, harmonize very well with the latter view; but, taken in its entirety, biblical teaching carries the conclusion that an objective phase, in the sense just indicated, belongs to the work of Christ. A necessity is attached to that work which implies that it belongs in the very ground of God's gracious economy, instead of being simply the more efficacious among the various means of influencing the hearts of men. When we hear Christ saying: "No man cometh unto the Father but by me,"[2] or Peter declaring, "In none other is there salvation, neither is there any other name under heaven, that is given among men, wherein we must be saved,"[3] we naturally gain the impression that Christ's mediation founds in general the possibility of human salvation as well as promotes the process of salvation. The same impression is made by the language of Paul when he speaks of justification as being through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus; of the work of Christ as providing that God might be just while justifying sinners; of peace with God and access into His grace being through our Lord Jesus Christ; of the righteous obedience of Christ as founding the possibility of justification unto life for all men.[4] The sacrifi-

[1] "The self-oblation which was consummated on the cross was begun at the incarnation." (J. S. Lidgett, The Spiritual Principle of the Atonement, p. 290.)

[2] John xiv. 6. [3] Acts iv. 12.

[4] Rom. iii. 24, v. 1, 2, 18.

cial terminology of the New Testament argues likewise for an objective value or bearing of Christ's work. The Jewish ritual, as has been seen, figured by means of the sacrificial blood a covering of sins before the face of God. In apostolic thought that ritual was credited with foreshadowing the truths of the Christian dispensation.[1] It is next to inconceivable, therefore, that when the apostles heard Christ speak of His blood being shed for the remission of sins, or themselves spoke of Him as being offered in His death for sins, they did not consider that His sacrifice was somehow an essential constituent of the divine economy, objectively a basis of human salvation. If they had attached to it only a subjective bearing, they could hardly have thought of describing it by a term so thoroughly suggestive of an objective sense as is the term "propitiation."[2] This term, it is true, does not often occur, and may have been used in a somewhat accommodated sense. But the fact that it could have been used at all — as it was by John, Paul, and the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews — is a token that their thought of the atonement included an objective aspect. Once more, it is to be noticed that New Testament language encourages a positive repose upon Christ's mediation which would appear out of place if the sole object of His mission was to give men a better motive for loving God, by means of a clearer apprehension of His love. Not to repeat other illustrations of this fact, we notice the significance of the instruction given to the disciples to ask for benefits in Christ's name and confidently to expect that what is thus asked for will be received. To ask in the name of Christ is to ask on the basis of an acknowledged and intimate association with Him. The phrase very likely implies an asking that is conformable to the spirit of Christ; but quite as clearly it emphasizes the mediatorial efficacy of Christ, the ground that is laid in Him for access to the Father and to all the treasure of the Father's house. The direction

[1] Col. ii. 17.

[2] *ἱλασμός, ἱλαστήριον, ἱλάσκεσθαι.* 1 John ii. 2, iv. 10; Rom. iii. 25; Heb. ii. 17.

on asking in Christ's name puts in a positive, encouraging form somewhat of the meaning of the negative declaration, "No man cometh unto the Father but by me."

A hindrance to assuming an objective bearing of Christ's work will perhaps be found in the parable of the prodigal son and in other representations in the Gospels which indicate that God, on His part, is very ready to receive all who turn unto Him in true repentance. But representations of this kind do not in reality stand at all in the way of attributing an objective phase to the atonement. They proclaim the fact, never to be questioned, that a seeking, welcoming love is characteristic of God. The fact of such a love, however, is far from implying that fitness of method is a matter of indifference in the bestowment of grace. In a wise and holy being, love cannot be expected to deny either wisdom or holiness. These can properly be viewed, not indeed as limiting the measure of love, but as conditioning its method in the great task of recovering a fallen race. In the order of passages referred to, Christ was picturing the ample measure of the Father's love. That He had no intention of denying that this love is conditioned in its method, or operates within a prearranged economy of grace, is clearly enough intimated by the terms which He employed to describe His own sacrificial and redemptive vocation. But to suppose God's love to be truly conditioned in its method of restoring sinners is just equivalent to providing a place for an objective phase in the work of atonement. A subsequent paragraph will illustrate this point.

IV. — Theories which Must be Pronounced Inadequate in the Light of Scriptural Teaching.

The conclusions reached will serve to facilitate a judgment upon various theories respecting the atonement. Several are subject to criticism as ignoring or rejecting the objective

value, the Godward bearing, of Christ's work. Here belong the Socinian theory, that of Schleiermacher, that of Bushnell, and that of Ritschl. It is the more proper to notice each of these, as each has its element of truth as well as its deficit.

In the original Socinian scheme the whole work of Christ is summed up under two main points of view. On the one hand, He appears upon earth as the inspired teacher; on the other, He appears in heaven as the exalted king of men, and the dispenser, by divine appointment, of all spiritual blessings. His death is to be regarded as subordinate to one or the other of these points of view. It proclaimed His sincerity as a teacher, afforded a unique example of suffering patience, and was a necessary antecedent to His resurrection, whereby the truth of His divine mission was attested, and a most salutary hope of future blessedness was given to men. Viewed as an example of unswerving fidelity, Christ's death inspires to fortitude; while taken as the necessary antecedent to the resurrection and glorification, it was subservient to a display of God's benevolent intent toward the race in spite of its ill desert.

In all this truth is to be recognized. Nevertheless, in the Socinian representation one is not in the atmosphere of the apostolic teaching. The gospel message seems to be devitalized. As the dignity of Christ's person is retrenched, so in equal degree is the significance of his redemptive work. The defective christology reacts upon the soteriology. Even if only a manward bearing were to be assigned to the work of atonement, the Socinian theory would fall much below the scale of the apostolic doctrine. That theory, therefore, must be regarded as doubly defective in the light of New Testament teaching. It may contain important accessories to Christ's work of reconciliation; the real heart of the subject it does not reach.

Schleiermacher's theory runs in a noticeably deeper channel than the Socinian. As he made the distinctive feature in

Christ's person to be His perfect God-consciousness, so also he conceived that the same was at the foundation of the work of redemption and reconciliation. Drawn by the bond of His high-priestly sympathy, Christ shares the lot of men, and exposes himself to the pains, inward and outward, which come from contact with human sin. The closeness of the relation thus established with humanity becomes the means of an effective interchange. In proportion as the faith of men is elicited toward Him, they are drawn into the circle of His God-consciousness, are made to share in His sense of sonship. Imbued with this new and life-giving sense of sonship, and convinced that the Redeemer, with whom they feel that they are vitally connected, is an object of God's perfect complacency, they are able to apprehend that in and through Him they are reconciled to God, so that the sufferings to which they are still exposed are relieved of the aspect of wrath. Also God, on His part, sees those who are thus united to His Son, not as they would be by themselves, but as they are in virtue of this effective relation. They may still be imperfect in heart and life; but God views them as having, through their union with Christ, the pledge and potency of ultimate perfection, so that the good pleasure which He has in His Son reaches also to them.[1]

As to the merits of this representation, it must be confessed that it has such an appearance of reasonableness that there can be very little motive to dispute its truth. But does it contain the whole truth? A suspicion of a deficit is naturally insinuated by a consideration of the very pale character which Schleiermacher gave to the divine attributes,[2] and also by the fact of his optimistic determinism. A theological system which included these features would not naturally contain a complete theory of atonement. We miss, as we

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[1] Christliche Glaube, §§ 100–104.

[2] See Part II. Chap. I. Sect. I.

might expect to miss, in Schleiermacher's treatment of the subject, that impression of the exceeding sinfulness of sin, and of the profound claims of the divine righteousness which is enforced upon us by the total representations of the Scriptures. He points to truths which have an important place within the redemptive economy; but the relation of that economy as a whole to the ethical nature of God receives no due consideration in His scheme. In the rational contemplation of that relation, a place may be found for the objective phase of atonement which was seen to be implied by the scriptural teaching.

According to Bushnell, the virtue of Christ's work lay in its authentic manifestation of God, through the most effective means of manifestation, namely, vicarious sacrifice. Nothing else was required, since the barrier to reconciliation was wholly in man, and not at all in God. Love, which is the very principle of vicarious sacrifice, sent the Son of God into the field of inevitable exposure and suffering. His ministry of self-denial, flowing thus out of the heart of God and revealing God's heart to men, is intrinsically adapted to be the source of unequalled moral influence. It is this in all the fuller measure because it not merely emphasizes the love of God, but gives an unique disclosure of all His moral perfections. While there was no need on God's part that the law should be honored as a preliminary to man's forgiveness, Christ's sacrifice does, in fact, confer unmeasured honor upon the law. "Everything that we see," says Bushnell, "in the incarnate life and suffering death, is God magnifying the honor of His law by the stress of His own stupendous sacrifice."[1] Again he remarks, "It is obvious enough that, in such a way of obedience, Christ makes a contribution of honor to the law He obeys that will do more to enthrone it in our reverence than all the desecrations of sin have done to pluck it down, —

[1] The Vicarious Sacrifice, p. 302.

more than all conceivable punishments to make it felt and keep it in respect. The glory of His incarnate mission is precisely — and in this is the gain of it — that He unbosoms, in time, what love and obedience to law were hid in God's unseen majesty, or but dimly and feebly shown before."[1] A full-orbed disclosure like this, Bushnell contends, is, above all things, adapted to rebuke and heal man's sinful disposition, and thus to accomplish all that is required for complete reconciliation.

That much in this representation is gloriously true is not to be doubted. Any theory of the atonement which slights the self-sacrificing virtue of divine love, or clouds over the beauty of its manifestation in Christ by the interposition of stringent legal analogies, eclipses the very sunlight of the gospel landscape. Nevertheless, a comparison of the moral-influence theory of Bushnell with the whole line of scriptural teaching leaves the impression of a deficit. It needs to be rounded out by a complementary truth. The gifted author himself came to confess as much, only the complement which he brought forward was not happily selected. In a later treatise he assumed that the term "reconciliation" is not solely descriptive of what transpires in men, but has a certain application to the divine attitude toward men. As we, by making cost to ourselves for an enemy, overcome our inward reluctance to forgive, so God, by entering into sacrifice for sinners, becomes in His own feeling fully at peace with Himself in extending grace to them. Herein tribute is paid to the demand for recognizing an objective element in the atonement, but that element is conceived in a too anthropomorphic fashion. A better complement to his original subjective theory might have been found in a due weighing of the import of that unequalled display of the divine righteousness which he himself associated with the life, suffering, and death of Christ.

[1] The Vicarious Sacrifice, pp. 314, 319.

Ritschl's teaching is substantially at one with the first form of Bushnell's theory in repudiating an objective bearing of Christ's work. All judicial and governmental terms, he contends, misconstrue the relation of God to the redemptive process. They divert attention from the real trend of biblical teaching. The characteristic idea of God in the New Testament is that He is the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the relation in which He stands to Christ shapes the conception of His relation to men. It is in the character of father that He approaches them and forgives their sins. "The ground of justification or the forgiveness of sins is the benevolent, gracious, compassionate determination of the will of God to grant to sinners access to Himself." The whole design of Christ's work upon earth was to reveal and give practical effect to the benevolent intent of God. No vicarious satisfaction was either required or offered. Christ did not and could not bear the penalty which properly attaches to sinners, since the essential characteristic of that penalty is the feeling of guilt and consequent separation from divine communion. The worth of His sufferings lay in their revealing the moral worth of His person, or the extent of His righteous obedience in the fulfillment of His calling. In the discharge of His calling He gave effect to God's gracious purpose and brought salvation to men. That calling was the founding of a spiritual kingdom, a universal religious communion, in which a common sense of sonship and brotherhood serves as a bond of union. To be brought truly within the communion thus instituted is to be made a recipient of justification. The love of God toward the obedient head of the communion is fittingly extended to the members.[1]

Ritschl's theory invites much the same estimate as Schleiermacher's. It contains important truth; but it is also to be charged with a grave deficit. Proceeding on the basis that

[1] Die Christliche Lehre von der Rechtfertigung und Versöhnung.

the whole ethical nature of God is absorbed in His loving will, it pays no adequate respect to the claims of divine righteousness.

It may be noticed that both Schleiermacher and Ritschl grant that Christ's standing has a certain efficacy as respects the relations of believers to God. Had they joined with this admission the definite affirmation that it answered a requirement of God's holiness and ethical intensity to make the Son, who so perfectly fulfilled the claims of obedience through suffering and death, the medium of disclosing His grace to sinners, they might be credited with acknowledging an objective element in atonement. But, as such an affirmation is foreign to the tenor of their teaching, the objective element must be regarded as substantially denied.

V. — Theories which Exaggerate some Phase of Christ's Work of Atonement.

Along with theories whose fault is the neglect of important aspects rather than an overdrawing of those which are recognized as valid, we have others which are exposed to criticism as exaggerating some phase pertaining to the subject of atonement. Here belong the Swedenborgian theory, the so-called mystical, and the judicial. The last may be described otherwise as the theory of penal satisfaction.

In accordance with his conception that the peace and welfare of the universe depend upon the conservation of a proper balance between interacting components, Swedenborg conceived that a principal end of Christ's coming was the repressing of infernal spirits, the confining of them to such limits as might be consistent with a right equilibrium between the heavens and the hells. The latter, he says, had grown up to such a height as to crowd upon the domain of the former. In order to fight against and repress the hells, the Lord was necessarily incarnated, for otherwise He would have lacked

the means of an effective communication with them, just as one soul cannot communicate with another except through the medium of a body.[1]

The strangeness of this theory coördinates it with the most grotesque of the patristic representations respecting the relation of the redemptive work to Satan.[2] It is justly subject to criticism as giving an exaggerated and fanciful interpretation of the agency of the Redeemer in destroying the works of the devil, as slighting the close connection which the New Testament assumes between the work of Christ and the remission of sins, and as allowing the physical to encroach upon the domain of the ethical. No one whose religious thinking has not come to be dominated by the physical analogies which Swedenborg imported into the spiritual world will be inclined to picture, as the central fact of Christ's mission, a conflict with infernal spirits through the medium of a corporeal investment.

The mystical theory, somewhat vague in itself, is the more difficult to define because it has not been held as an exclusive theory, and has been differently colored by the differing adjuncts with which it has been associated. It may be said, however, that its emphatic point of view is the unity of the Son of God with the race, which unity was established, or at least brought to manifestation, through the incarnation.

[1] True Christian Religion, n. 114–125.

[2] The reference to the fathers here is not to be understood as giving any countenance to the gross and amazingly persistent slander, that for a thousand years the Church knew no other theory of the redemptive work than that which teaches the payment of a ransom to Satan. A few of the Greek fathers did verbally assume the fact of such a payment. The principal Latin fathers, though allowing from the time of Augustine a right in Satan over fallen men, did not teach that a ransom was either stipulated for or paid to him. In both the Greek and the Latin Church the relation of the redemptive work to Satan was only one aspect among several which received emphasis. Many more sentences can be quoted which speak of Christ as making a sacrifice to God than can be adduced for the notion that He paid a price to Satan. (See History of Doctrine, I. 121–124, 251–257, 362–367.)

Human nature in Christ, it is conceived, is not an isolated private thing, but something central and fundamental to the organism of humanity, so intimately related to the general body of mankind that it is the medium of renewing life thereto, and the standing which it acquires in the way of obedience, suffering, and glorification accrues without any arbitrary imputation to the benefit of the general body. The tenor of the theory is mirrored in the following extracts from Thomas Erskine: "Christ came into Adam's place. This is the real substitution. . . . We are separated from each other by being individual persons. But Jesus had no human personality. He had the human nature under the personality of the Son of God. And so His human nature was more open to the commonness of men; for the divine personality, while it separated Him from sinners in point of sin, united Him to them in love. And thus the sins of other men were to Jesus what the affections and lusts of his own particular flesh are to each individual believer. Every man was a part of Him, and He felt the sins of every man, — just as the new nature in every believer feels the sins of the old nature, — not in sympathy, but in sorrow and abhorrence. . . . Here is the simple connection between the atonement of Christ and the sanctification of His members. The atonement consisted in Christ's accepting the punishment of sin as the head of the nature; and the sanctification of His members consists in their accepting it also in the power of His spirit dwelling in them. . . . Christ's sufferings made the atonement, because through them the life was let into the body; through them Christ became the head of life to the body, and it is only by that life in us that we can lovingly receive our punishment and put to our seal that God is righteous in it. . . . God has a personal tender affection for every man, so that He desires union and fellowship with every man. Now the Son declared this love of the Father by coming into the *root* of the nature, that part which Adam occupied, and thus coming into every man, and thus

testifying to the Father's loving desire of union with every man." [1]

Some of the sentences of F. D. Maurice are much in line with those just cited. He speaks of Christ as the root of the life in all men, and makes the intrinsic connection of men, as men, with Him to be such that His justification, or the sentence of approbation which was pronounced upon Him in His resurrection, was at the same time the justification of all men.

It is to be objected to this theory, that, in assuming a kind of natural union of men, as such, with Christ, it exaggerates and misconstrues the scriptural teaching. It is indeed a New Testament truth that the Son of God, who took on Himself the nature of man, is essentially fitted to be the head of all men, and that in Him God's gracious purpose goes out to all men. But it is also a New Testament truth that effective union with Christ is ethically mediated, or dependent upon faith, and thus by no means pertains to men as such. The total representation is not that men are necessarily in Christ, but that they may or may not be in Him, according to their response to the word of salvation. On rational grounds, too, the presumed natural union with Christ needs a better exposition than has been given. Questions like the following remain to be answered: How did Christ come into the root of humanity at large? What is the warrant for assuming that humanity was less concrete in Him than in any other? Supposing that humanity was not individualized in Him as in us, how could that fact in any wise provide for a community with Him which is not possible between men generally? That Christ by virtue of His humanity should come into sympathetic relation with men, and reveal such truths as are adapted greatly to broaden the avenues of approach to their hearts and consciences, and thereby mightily forward the work of spiritual renovation, is quite conceivable; but it is far from apparent that such a

[1] The Brazen Serpent, or Life coming through Death.

union with Christ as is more or less distinctly assumed in the mystical theory admits of rational construction. The theory seems to slide into an unethical point of view, and is too nearly akin to the scholastic aberration respecting the real existence of universals to be agreeable to a sound philosophy.

In the judicial theory God is contemplated preëminently in the character of judge. Men appear before Him as guilty and condemned to punishment. He is under no obligation to accept aught in place of their punishment. Still He is at liberty to remit the penalties which impend over them, provided adequate satisfaction is rendered to His justice. In the voluntary obedience and suffering of His Son such a satisfaction is rendered for a definite portion of mankind. This, if not in kind a full equivalent for the penalties due to the sins of all the elect, was in point of value a full equivalent. It was designed, moreover, specifically to offset those penalties and not merely to serve as a fitting antecedent to a general display of forgiving mercy. Having once engaged to accept the satisfaction, God is obliged, in consistency and justice, to acquit those for whom it was made. His grace was abundantly illustrated in the original provision of the satisfaction; but to give effect thereto in the pardon of its proper beneficiaries is rather a matter of justice than of grace.

The above terms sketch the judicial theory in its unqualified form, as it appears, for example, in the pages of Charles Hodge. He describes the satisfaction rendered by Christ as "penal or forensic," the "bearing the penalty of the law" in the stead of sinners, and represents its benefits as being secured by distinct covenant between the persons of the Trinity. "All the benefits," he says, "which accrue to sinners in consequence of the satisfaction of Christ are to them pure gratuities; blessings to which in themselves they have no claim. They call for gratitude and exclude boasting. Nevertheless, it is a matter of justice that the blessings which Christ intended to secure for His people should be actually bestowed upon them.

This follows, for two reasons: first, they were promised to Him as the reward of His obedience and sufferings. God covenanted with Christ that if He fulfilled the conditions imposed, if He made satisfaction for the sins of His people, they should be saved. It follows, secondly, from the nature of satisfaction. If the claims of justice are satisfied they cannot be again enforced. This is the analogy between the work of Christ and the payment of a debt. The point of agreement between the two cases is not the nature of the satisfaction rendered, but one aspect of the effect produced. In both cases the persons for whom the satisfaction is made are certainly freed. Their exemption or deliverance is in both cases, and equally in both, a matter of justice. This is what the Scriptures teach when they say that Christ gave Himself for a ransom. When a ransom is paid and accepted, the deliverance of the captive is a matter of justice."[1]

The certain deliverance of those for whom the ransom was paid implies of course, on any other supposition than the assured salvation of all, that Christ died for only a portion of mankind. And this Hodge is very free to affirm. He contends, indeed, that the meritorious work of Christ brings to men generally certain incidental benefits. But these are the merest crumbs compared with the eternal salvation which is purchased for the elect. God's redeeming love is represented as fenced in to a part of the race. "It follows," says Hodge, "from the nature of the covenant of redemption as presented in the Bible, that Christ did not die equally for all mankind, but that He gave Himself for His people and for their redemption."[2]

The judicial or penal-satisfaction theory, as thus outlined, has the advantage of apparent definiteness and intelligibility. Its advocates, it is true, need to justify the application of such

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[1] Systematic Theology, Part III. Chap. VI. § 3.

[2] *Ibid.*, Part III. Chap. viii. § 2.

terms as *penal* or *punishment* to the sufferings of Christ. In strictness it is impossible to suppose that they had the character denoted by those terms. As Ebrard well says: "If I bear the chastisement of another instead of him, the same suffering which *for him* would have had the moral quality of a punishment has not for me, who am innocent, the moral quality of a punishment. For the notion of punishment contains, besides the objective element of suffering inflicted by the judge, also the subjective element of the sense of guilt or of an evil conscience endured by the guilty, or the relation between the evil act committed and the consequent suffering inflicted." [1] But granting that we have in the terms commented upon only a verbal infelicity — the idea being that Christ's sufferings, though not punishment proper, so satisfied the claims of justice that they could be accepted by the Divine Judge in place of the punishment of the elect — very serious objections still bar out the judicial theory.

In the first place, this theory assumes a substitution of a more exact and technical order than is necessarily elicited by a fair interpretation of the Scriptures. It will be remembered that in the discussion of canons of interpretation the conclusion was reached that, inasmuch as the Old Testament institutions of sacrifice furnish a permanent lesson rather in their general character and trend than in the minutiæ of ritual prescription, so in the New Testament imagery based upon those institutions essential truth is to be sought more in the general trend of the whole group of representations than in individual items. However, there is scarcely any need of appealing to this canon in the present connection. It is perfectly safe to challenge advocates of the judicial theory to produce a single sentence from the New Testament which implies with any degree of distinctness that Christ's sufferings offset the sins of any company of transgressors in so specific a sense that

[1] Quoted by Van Oosterzee, Christian Dogmatics, p. 603.

their pardon was made thereby a matter of justice. Take such emphatic expressions as are found in Heb. ix. 27, 28, 1 Pet. ii. 24, and Gal. iii. 13. A vicarious function is undoubtedly asserted in these passages. They testify that Christ bore undeserved sufferings, and that these sufferings have in the divine administration some kind of virtue or instrumentality in the taking away of sins. But can anyone see that they necessarily imply anything more than that the sufferings of Christ afforded a general ground for a gracious economy, and in that sense contemplated all sins in need of pardon? Most certainly not. To read into these, or any similar sentences, the doctrine of specific satisfaction for the sins of a particular portion of the race is, to say the least, perfectly gratuitous.

In the second place, the judicial theory is exposed to all the serious objections, scriptural and rational, which hold against the doctrines of limited atonement and unconditional election. We couple these two doctrines together here, for in essence they belong together. Some theologians, it is true, speak of Christ as dying for all, and then save the doctrine of unconditional election by saying that God had no design to apply the benefits of His death to all, or to make them equally attainable by all. But this gives a farcical aspect to divine procedure. If there was no earnest purpose to make the benefits of Christ's death truly accessible to all, then all substance is taken out of the purpose that Christ should die for all, and it becomes sadly akin to moonshine.

It will be a part of our task in the next chapter to show how the doctrines of limited atonement and unconditional election eclipse the fairest testimonies in the Scriptures to God's benevolent disposition, and assail the very foundations of a rational faith in His ethical nature. In this connection it suffices simply to mention that the immense objections which stand against these doctrines are properly regarded as shutting the judicial theory out of the pale of credibility.

Once more, the judicial theory involves conclusions which

are contrary to the natural implications of the scriptural teaching respecting pardon or justification. An unsophisticated reader of the New Testament must gain these impressions: (1) That justification is in its consummation, as well as in its primary basis, a matter of grace on God's part. (2) That faith, vital enough to be a principle of self-surrender and obedience, is a fundamental condition of justification. (3) That all men to whom the message of the gospel comes are seriously solicited to exercise this faith, and are therefore genuinely in the position of candidates for justification.[1] Now, the judicial theory is more or less discordant with every one of these impressions. As has already been indicated, it is discordant with the first; for, though it assumes that grace laid the primary foundation of justification, it makes its actual consummation a matter of justice, something legally binding in virtue of pains long since suffered by an accepted substitute. It is at variance with the second, for it makes faith not so much a real condition of a divine gift as a stage in a foreordained and inevitable process through which that gift is appropriated; in other words, instead of allowing faith to be a condition it reduces the same to the plane of a mere instrument. It is flatly contradictory to the third impression, for it implies that God has no genuine wish or intention that any shall exercise justifying faith except a limited number of individuals supposed to have been specially contemplated in Christ's satisfaction.

In general, the aspect of crass legality which characterizes the judicial theory is a ground of objection. Doubtless in the language of religious feeling, which employs images rather as mediums of suggestion than of exact description, it answers very well to speak of Christ's self-sacrifice as a means of ransom. But to represent in formal theological exposition a bargain between the persons of the Trinity, wherein one of

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[1] See John iii. 14, 15, 36, vi. 51; Acts xiii. 39; Rom. iii. 22–26, vi. 17, 18; 2 Cor. v. 14, 15; Phil. iii. 8, 9; 1 Tim. ii. 4–6; Heb. ii. 9, v. 9; 1 John i. 9, v. 11, 12.

them engages to the other to undergo a certain order of judicially inflicted pains, on condition that the suffering endured shall be put to the account of such and such men — this is too close an assimilation of the highest heaven to the counting-house and the lawyer's office to be agreeable to healthy religious sensibilities.

VI. — The Elements of the Theory Which Best Agrees with Scriptural and Rational Data.

Having concluded that all theories which discard the objective element in the work of atonement are inadequate, and having criticised various theories as either misconstruing that element or exaggerating some other aspect of the subject, we have now to point out the view which seems best to meet the scriptural and rational requirements.

In the first place it is necessary, in order to gain a true apprehension of the subject, to transcend the standpoint of temporal succession. The historical evolution gives in separate intervals, and therefore in divided form, the truth which pertains to the subject of atonement. It mirrors the state of condemnation resulting from sin, the high demands of divine righteousness and holiness, the promptings of divine mercy and love, the visible agent of this mercy and love, the sacrifice or propitiation furnished in and through His costly obedience, the ground thereby afforded for a consistent exercise of mercy and love in the forgiveness of sins. In the contemplation of this historic succession it is possible for one to gain the impression of a change of attitude on the part of God. But pass to the divine point of view, and it will be seen that God does not shift His attitude, that things which are successive and contrasted in the historic evolution flow from one self-consistent disposition, that there is not first conflict between different attributes, and then restored equilibrium, but always perfect harmony.

By this unchanging self-consistent disposition in God we are not of course to understand a negation of variety or manifoldness in His ethical nature. That would be making God's character a blank. It is rather the perfect balance of different moral perfections which constitutes the self-consistent disposition.

To speak of a perfect balance of moral perfections is obviously the same thing as to affirm that these perfections are mutually conditioning. It implies such an interrelation that love never violates the demands of holiness, or holiness those of love, and that justice and mercy are never sacrificed the one to the other.

Now, suppose the greatest display of love and mercy that human thought can conceive, a remedial scheme which sets before a race of sinners not only the forgiveness of sins, but all the transcendent blessings which belong to the relation of sonship toward God, — what characteristics will such an economy of grace assume? Doubtless it must be intrinsically adapted to influence men to repentance and faith, or to work subjective receptivity for the benefits so generously proffered. But this is not all; it must reflect the balance or conditioning interrelation of the divine perfections. The divine holiness will not check the purpose of love. At the same time, the purpose of love will not override the dictates of holiness. Both, as being inalienable constituents of the self-consistent disposition of God, must be represented in, or give character to, the great remedial scheme, the world-embracing economy of grace. And this end is accomplished in so planning that economy that it must at once be a manifestation of immeasurable love, and a sanction to moral order or a testimony to the supreme value and necessity of righteousness.

To leave out the latter element would be to place God at variance with Himself, as though in the greatest undertaking of His administration that is known to us one side of His ethical nature could be kept in abeyance. And there is the

less reason to suppose that this element could be discarded in the method of grace, since an economy which should not include it would not be the best adapted to gain a healthful mastery over the minds and hearts of men. A manifestation of love which does not rest upon a background of holiness, or is not made to share the field with a majestic disclosure of the claims of righteousness, must be despoiled of no inconsiderable measure of subduing and regenerating power over men. Thus the subjective demand is at one with the objective requirement, with that which is founded in the interrelation of the divine attributes. Whether we look to the one or the other, we gain the impression that the only perfect, the only admissible, economy of grace is one that reflects the different divine attributes, — one, therefore, that God can initiate and move through in the totality of His ethical nature, or in entire consistency with Himself.

The above amounts to a definition of the objective element of the atonement. We give expression to that element when we say that the claims of divine holiness and justice conditioned the method of grace, and determined that the Son of God, who came with the message of forgiving love, should also clearly expose the sinfulness of sin, and render, through His humiliation, obedience, and suffering, the profoundest tribute to righteous law, and to the divine holiness and justice which it reflects. Taken in the plane of temporal succession, and sketched in language accommodated to man's limited power of apprehension, Christ's atoning work may be described as a sacrifice to God, a ransom, or a propitiation, — terms more or less suggestive perhaps of a change in the divine disposition. But when we ascend to the plane of essential relations, and consider how God's thought unites the end with the beginning, this apparent bearing is excluded from the work of atonement, and one self-consistent divine disposition is seen to be back of the whole economy of grace, the word atonement in its objective sense only accentuating the

phase of that economy which reflects the conditioning agency of the divine holiness and justice upon the method of the divine love. The exact extent of this conditioning agency it is not necessary to fix. Those who are blessed with an extra degree of dogmatic confidence may be left to work out the proof that not even one sinner could possibly have been saved on any other plan than the one adopted. It is enough to recognize the truth that a world-embracing economy, which included the highest conceivable manifestation of unmerited grace, needed also, in order to harmonize with fundamental demands of God's ethical nature, to emphasize the sanctity of law and the claims of righteousness.[1] It is, furthermore, unnecessary to determine just how much might have been spared from the actual contents of Christ's earthly ministry without trenching upon the perfection of His saving office. Some things, doubtless, might, in consistency with the working out of God's general purpose, have been otherwise than they were. But it is profitless to attempt to carry out this point of view. The truth to be noted is that words, deeds, and sufferings make a rounded whole which is marvellously adapted on the one hand to honor God through an authentic and symmetrical expression of His attributes, and on the other to serve as an effective antidote to the sinful disposition of men.[2]

It should not be overlooked that the assigning to the atonement a non-temporal character as respects its bearing upon divine thought and feeling, is both scriptural and philosophical. It is scriptural as expressing the meaning of the New Testa-

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[1] Compare the exposition of divine justice given in Part II. Chap. I. Sect. III.

[2] It may be remarked here that the accrediting of a very high value to the mediation of Christ in the economy actually adopted is not necessarily exclusive of the conclusion that it lay within the infinite resources of God to adopt some other means of saving men. Eminent representatives of the fathers, of the schoolmen, and of modern theology, have subscribed to this conclusion. See Sheldon, History of Christian Doctrine, I. 257, 258, 365; II. 139, 140.

ment description of Christ as the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.[1] It is philosophical, since God must be supposed to have contemplated the human race from eternity in all that bears essentially upon its character and relations. He contemplated it, therefore, from eternity, as conditioned in and through a redemptive economy; in other words, He contemplated it not as a Christless race, but as one incorporating in itself His well-beloved Son, and with Him both a supreme demonstration of the claims of righteousness and a unique potency of righteousness. In providing for such an order of contemplation, He may be said in a sense to have reconciled Himself to the race from eternity.

The theory outlined above, it will be observed, while it rejects the assumption that no objective element needs to be recognized in the work of atonement, is still very hospitable toward much that is urged under the subjective theories. It has no veto to pronounce against the main thoughts in Schleiermacher's exposition. It is also tolerant of a large part of that which Bushnell contended for in his original theory of vicarious sacrifice. In place of the objective element which Bushnell advocated in his revised theory, it predicates one more consonant with the divine perfections; that is, instead of representing that God by making cost to Himself for sinners becomes reconciled in His feeling to the bestowal of undeserved indulgence and blessing, it affirms that the economy of grace, planned of God before the ages, so reflected the conditioning interrelations of His moral attributes, that He could enter upon and execute it without any inward disharmony, without violence to any demand of His ethical nature. No attribute is prejudiced in the execution of the economy simply because all were regarded in its original determination.

As compared with the mystical theory, this emphasizes the ethical instrumentality of the incarnation. It assumes that

[1] Rev. xiii. 8; 1 Pet. i. 19, 20.

the Son of God came into the human sphere, not so much to make a kind of physical or natural connection with the race, as to give a balanced revelation of divine love and righteousness, and to savingly influence men by the whole glorious sum of truth expressed in His person, words, and deeds.

In contrast with the judicial theory this, for which we contend, repudiates the assumption of a specific satisfaction for the sins of selected beneficiaries of the atonement. At this point it takes sides with the so-called governmental theory, and strenuously maintains that the work of Christ, instead of satisfying distributive justice for any man or any number of men, established simply a suitable basis for a proffer of salvation to all men upon equal terms. That work was a condition of (or a fundamental and conditioning factor in) the dispensation of grace, wherein all men are solicited to become partakers of the divine forgiveness and blessing, but to which no one is entitled in justice.

While the governmental theory is decidedly preferable to the judicial in the respect just indicated, it is quite possible to push the governmental analogy too far in expounding the subject of atonement. And this has been done more or less from the days of Grotius to the present. Thus a very earnest and conspicuous advocate of the governmental theory remarks: "God as a righteous ruler must inflict merited penalty upon sin, not, indeed, in the gratification of any mere personal resentment, nor in the satisfaction of an absolute retributive justice, but in the interest of moral government, or find some rectorally compensatory measure for the remission of penalty. . . . Real as is the divine displeasure against sin and against sinners, atonement is made, not in its personal satisfaction, but in the fulfillment of the rectoral office of justice."[1] Now, the distinction which is assumed here between the dictates of personal feeling and the requirements of official standing may

[1] Miley, Systematic Theology, II. 96, 186.

doubtless apply to a limited being like man, whose motives are shaped by partial insight, and with whom complete self-consistency is rather a high ideal than a real achievement. But is it not a questionable anthropomorphism to carry over this distinction to God? Can it be supposed that He is conscious of one set of feelings or demands as Divine Person, and recognizes a different set as Divine Ruler? What is divine government but the dictate and outflow of His ethical nature, His dealing with moral beings in conformity with His fundamental personal relation to them? There is in truth no occasion for a disjunction between the personal and the governmental in Him. In His absolute self-consistency He stands in the same identical plane as Moral Ruler and as Divine Person. What is agreeable to His feeling in the one character is agreeable to His feeling in the other. If the ends of good government forbid an unconditional display of indulgence, so in no less degree do God's personal holiness and justice. If the ends of good government allow a high degree of clemency, provided its exercise is so guarded as to secure the interests of righteousness, so in like manner do the personal holiness and justice of God. We are obliged to conclude then that the governmental theory ought to be modified in so far as it gives place to the anthropomorphic conception that God is other in His governmental position than He is in His intrinsic nature, or that there is only a lax connection between the two.

It may have been noticed that nothing has been said respecting the acquisition by Christ of an excess of merits. One of the advantages of the theory here advocated is that it dispenses with all necessity of reference to any such thing. As is well known, this notion of an excess of merits played a conspicuous rôle in the concluding part of Anselm's theory of atonement. Having argued that man's demerit was an effectual bar to salvation, as involving a debt which he could never pay, he represented that Christ, by surrendering Himself to the death not due to Him as a holy being, acquired a vast merit, which,

since He did not need it for Himself, was applied to the offsetting of man's demerit. But, granting that something may be said in behalf of a possible transcending of obligation, or the acquisition of an extra merit, the turning of this extra merit into a transferable value and carrying it over literally to the account of others is by no means a thoroughly intelligible procedure. The supposed transaction has an artificial and arbitrary cast which prejudices its claim. It ought to be with a sense of relief that one turns to the thought that the efficacy of Christ's work depended upon no excess of merits, but rather upon its intrinsic worth in realizing a method of grace, at once conformable to subjective and objective requirement; conformable, that is, to man's need of being profoundly influenced, and to God's necessity of showing His love as a holy love, or one by no means disregardful of the sanctity of law and the claims of righteousness.

On this basis there is no lack of occasion still to confess spiritual dependence upon Christ, and to refer to His work in terms of grateful self-disparagement; since that work conditions the economy of grace apart from which is no salvation, and moreover, is in all who truly contemplate it a potentiality of righteousness without which no one can be pleasing to God.

Should any one think it worth while to challenge the propriety of setting forth as an objective element in the atonement that of which God Himself is the chief source, it must be replied that a Godward bearing is not excluded from a specific transaction because God himself is preëminently its originator. No absolute gift can possibly be made to Him who is alone the absolute. All good action which contemplates Him as an object has also its primary source in Him. The very penitence which is offered before His tribunal by the convicted transgressor has its principal spring in His grace. God receives in this case because He has given. But this fact does not exclude the conclusion that penitence is welcome to God, a tribute to His ethical nature and government, a condi-

tion of the enjoyment of His favor. So, in general, the fact that a transaction rests upon divine initiative and agency does not exclude a Godward bearing. The human is needed in a historic movement as a bearer and instrument of manifestation; but it can truly be said that the more of the divine there is in the initiation and progress of the movement, the greater is the tribute which it pays to the ethical nature and the government of God. From this point of view an incomparably significant Godward bearing belongs to the work of Christ. We may think of it as having objective worth, not indeed as giving God an incentive to be gracious, but as providing a fit method for the dispensation of His grace in a world-embracing economy.

Should it be asked, what does God want except the scheme practically efficient to win and to reform men? it is to be replied: God wants and must have the scheme which corresponds to the total requirements of His ethical nature, and this must greatly excell all others in practical efficiency. Love and righteousness admit of no divorce in the practically efficient scheme. Certainly the divine administration seems to proceed on this assumption. In general God's dealing with men manifestly links with the free gifts of love a demonstration of the demands of righteousness. Any act of discipline, for example, at His hand, is at once a token of divine love and a testimony to the claims of divine righteousness.

The theory here advocated, as has been stated, though not of the strict governmental type, follows the governmental theory, as opposed to the judicial, in a leading aspect. It admits the truth of the deeper subjective theories, but claims that these need to be rounded out by a better recognition of the interrelation of the divine attributes as mutually conditioning and demanding harmonious representation in a world-embracing economy. The principal points which it emphasizes are these: (1) There is an objective element in the atonement, namely, that feature of Christ's work which meets the demand

that the claims of divine holiness or righteousness should be signally expressed along with the supreme manifestation of God's love. (2) For the divine mind this demand was essentially met in the original planning of the economy of grace, so that one self-consistent disposition in God is to be regarded as back of His entire dealing with the race. (3) Along with the objective requirement there was a subjective one, which needed to be equally respected, that is, the requirement that men should be approached in a mode intrinsically suited to influence them effectually in the direction of faith and love. (4) The objective and subjective requirements connected with the redemptive process are to be viewed as perfectly harmonious, since love is most potent in its appeals when joined with a manifest stress upon the claims of righteousness. (5) The work of Christ met both demands in full measure. It therefore met all the demands of the case. The notion of a real transfer of merits out of an excess supposed to have been gained by the Redeemer can be left out of the account. (6) It was the ethical element in Christ's work, the factor of holy obedience and loving self-sacrifice running through His doing and suffering, that was efficacious to meet both the subjective and the objective demand. (7) The economy of grace, as brought to manifestation in Christ, provides a basis for the salvation of all men on equal conditions, rather than strictly purchases or absolutely guarantees the salvation of any.

If one desires a briefer summary let him say: (1) The salvation provided in Christ for the race is the free gift of the love of God. (2) This love, the inseparable companion of righteousness, effectuates its end by a method or economy which pays exalted tribute to divine righteousness. (3) To the mind of God this tribute was present from eternity; before the ages he viewed the race as transcendently enriched in ethical value by its incorporation of His well-beloved Son; no change of attitude on God's part toward the race is to be

imagined to have been induced or wrought out in the course of history. This form of statement has the advantage that it puts to the front the point which merits ever the first notice and the deepest stress. A true contemplation can never make the love of God secondary.

VII — Answers to Objections to the Idea of Atonement.

Very little space needs to be given to objections to the idea of atonement, since most of those which have been urged contemplate some phase of teaching not contained in the above exposition. Had we made a broad antithesis between the relation of the Father and that of the Son to the redemptive process, or spoken of penal satisfaction, or assumed a literal transfer of merit, there might be occasion for an extended apology. But, as it is, we cannot imagine more than one or two objections.

Possibly some one may be inclined to question whether the work of Christ was in fact a great tribute to divine righteousness. In response we may repeat the rational consideration that a high stage of history, a movement specially initiated and controlled by the divine, naturally renders special tribute to the ethical nature and government of God. We may also appeal to the facts of Christian consciousness. Men who have come to a heart knowledge of Christianity will unite in declaring that the obedient and suffering Son of God is the mightiest protest against sin, the most emphatic sanction to the value of God's moral order, that ever crossed the field of human vision.

Again, it is possible that one may wish to contend for the efficacy of simple repentance to make amends for sin. But, aside from the fact that repentance never makes good a bad record, the question is not about the possibility of the unconditional acceptance of the repentance of an individual, but

about a self-consistent procedure for at once producing repentance and administering grace in a scheme of world-wide administration. In considering the essentials of such a scheme we come by a very direct path to all that has been contended for as constituting the objective element in the atonement.

As regards practical bearings, it is legitimate to observe that warmth of religious sentiment is best secured, not by attempts to persuade ourselves of our own competency to reconcile ourselves to God, but by going out of ourselves to contemplate what God has done for us in Christ. This is emphatically acknowledged by Bushnell. At the conclusion of his contention for his purely subjective theory, he confesses that Christian piety needs to express itself in terms that are naturally significant of an objective element in atonement. "Any strictly subjective style of religion," he says, "is vicious. It is moral self-culture, in fact, and not religion. We think of ourselves abundantly in the selfishness of our sins. What we need, above all, is to be taken off the self-centre and centred in God. Ceasing to go by contrivance, we must learn to go by inspiration; that is, by the free impulse of God in our faith. Hence the profound importance of the altar symbols, divinely prepared and fashioned to be the form of the Christian grace."[1]

[1] Vicarious Sacrifice, p. 542.

Part V.

THE KINGDOM OF REDEMPTION, OR THE PRACTICAL REALIZATION OF THE REDEMPTIVE PURPOSE.

Part V.

THE KINGDOM OF REDEMPTION, OR THE PRACTICAL REALIZATION OF THE REDEMPTIVE PURPOSE.

CHAPTER I.

THE APPROPRIATION OF SALVATION BY THE INDIVIDUAL.

I. — Universality of the Opportunity to Appropriate the Salvation Provided in Christ.

Among the grounds for rejecting the judicial theory of the atonement, mention was made of the fact that it rests on the assumption of a limited scope in the purpose of grace and an unconditional predestination of a portion of mankind to eternal life. This assumption — which necessitates the conclusion that the non-elect never come within the possibility of salvation — was described as thoroughly objectionable. What we have to do in the present connection is to justify that description. Our contention is for the universality of the opportunity of salvation, as against an exclusive and unconditional choice of individuals to eternal life. The argument will involve a reference to scriptural, historical, and rational considerations.

It is not to be denied that the idea of election or predesti-

nation is awarded considerable prominence in the Scriptures. It could not have been otherwise, if their pages were to reflect the vast sweep of the divine agency necessarily operative in founding and consummating the kingdom of righteousness. As the working out of this supreme enterprise is immeasurably above creaturely abilities, it would be a glaring incongruity not to represent the far-reaching foresight and powerful direction of God as fundamental to it all. In any reasonable view His sovereignty, considered not indeed as arbitrariness, but as wise authority, must be regarded as determining very much according to its own behests. The existence of the economy of grace is altogether by the choice of God, not of men. The stages of that economy, from the first overtures to sinners to their investment with the glory of a supernatural destiny, are properly characterized as His choice. In the adjustment of nations and individuals to the economy, His agency is of vast consequence. Free will in man does not annul the necessity of providential ordering in this matter. To get His gracious purpose effectively before the contemplation of men, God must have bearers and interpreters of the same. The fittest interpreters for a given time and place need to be selected, and fitness for this vocation is not independent of foregoing discipline. Israel could never have fulfilled its mission in bringing the divine testimony to the nations without special training. Apart from the light shed by suitable antecedents, the world would not have known what to make of the gospel message as it fell from the lips of Christ and the apostles. The likelihood of a right response to that message on the part of a given individual is vastly greater under one set of conditions than under another, since different conditions afford very different degrees of motive power, and motives must be admitted to be influential even if it be denied that they are absolutely determining. The same truth which finds one man receptive encounters a deaf ear in another. The one believes readily; the other cannot believe

at once, in the sense that he cannot instantly transport himself into the atmosphere of loving trust, his free will perchance only availing to take some initial step in the direction of such trust, and needing special aids of divine grace and providential ordering to lead it forward to the proper goal. Thus the divine procedure has of necessity the appearance of selection or predestination, and is such very largely in fact. The conjunction of the prepared subject with the message of grace, whatever else may contribute thereto, falls preëminently under the category of divine ordering. But how is the divine superintendence managed? Is it so managed as to secure the fittest instruments for the greatest advance of the kingdom of grace and salvation that is practicable in a world of free agents? or is the sole care to bring into the divine household a certain number, unconditionally chosen, to the everlasting neglect or exclusion of all others? The fault of the Augustinian or Calvinistic predestinarian is, that he fastens upon this ultra sense of predestination, and reads it into the Scriptures. Not content with the majestic office which is open to divine sovereignty in ordering the progress of the dispensation toward the grandest attainable result, he will have it that the absolute choice of God fixes the eternal destiny of all souls.

If predestination in this sense is a scriptural idea we should expect to find it first of all in Paul's Epistles, the writings of the New Testament which lay the maximum stress upon the doctrine that salvation is God's gift rather than man's acquisition. Among Pauline sentences none exalt the sovereignty of God in matters of grace more than those in the passage which begins in the ninth and runs into the eleventh chapter of the Epistle to the Romans. A divine choice is there portrayed which is based upon no consideration of foregoing works; a sovereignty which makes of one, like the hardened Pharaoh, a vessel of wrath, and of another a vessel of mercy; a prerogative in dealing with men which is even likened to that of the

potter over the clay. But it is to be noticed in the first place that the apostle's discourse was sharpened and intensified by the character of the opponent whom he had in mind. He was arguing against a party whose proud claim to exclusive privilege needed to be beaten down into the dust. Hence, in his vehement strain, he leaves aside for the moment all qualifying considerations, and marshals into line the most striking instances that he can select of an apparently unconditional choice on the part of God. As is remarked by Bruce: "Had St. Paul been in the mood to pursue an apologetic line of thought, with a view to reconciling divine sovereignty with divine love on the one hand, and with human responsibility on the other, he could easily have found materials for the purpose even in the history of God's dealing with the king of Egypt. For what was the natural tendency of the signs and wonders wrought in the land of Ham? Surely to soften Pharaoh's heart, to the effect of letting Israel go. God hardened Pharaoh's heart by means fitted and intended to have the opposite effect. And the fact is so in all cases. The means of hardening are ever means naturally fitted to soften and win. The apostle knew this as well as we, but he was not in the mood to indulge in such a strain of explanatory, conciliatory remark. He was dealing with proud men who thought the election of their fathers gave them a prescriptive right to divine favor. Therefore, instead of softening down hard statements, he goes on to make harder statements still; representing God as a potter and men as clay, out of which God can make such vessels as He pleases, one to be a vessel of mercy, another to be a vessel of destruction, to be dashed to pieces at the maker's will. As against human arrogance it is a legitimate representation, but as an exact complete statement of the relation between God and man it cannot of course be regarded. So viewed, it would be simple fatalism."[1]

[1] St. Paul's Conception of Christianity, pp. 313–315.

In the second place, it is to be noticed that the divine choice which Paul was portraying was not conceived as a choice of individuals to eternal destinies, but rather as a choice of nations and individuals to ministries and blessings, more or less honorable and extensive, in connection with the advancing kingdom of truth and salvation. His discourse had no direct bearing upon the technical traditional theory of election and reprobation. The historical position of Israel as the chosen people supplied him with his dominant point of view, and he wished to show that the same God who had graciously called Israel ought to be regarded as perfectly free to call the Gentiles also. The divine prerogative for which he contended was far from being that of selecting men unconditionally for the endless pains of hell or the endless joys of heaven; it was simply that of adjusting diversely their relation to His unfolding dispensation upon earth.

In the third place it is to be noticed that, notwithstanding the unqualified stress which the apostle placed upon God's sovereignty in the heat of his discourse, he nevertheless gave a clear hint that a qualification must be supposed. Of that very portion of Israel which he represents as hardened, cast off, sundered from the source of spiritual blessing as a branch is broken off from the parent stock — of this outcast and reprobate portion of Israel he says: "They also, if they continue not in their unbelief, shall be grafted in: for God is able to graft them in again."[1] What is this but a clear intimation that the apostle after all acknowledged that man's free agency counts for something in shaping the outcome?

Finally, it is to be noticed that the apostle, so far from representing that God has an exclusive interest in the salvation of certain selected individuals, gives place to the optimistic expectation that even the rejection of unbelieving Israel will be overruled for the widest possible extension of salvation

[1] Rom. xi. 23.

both among Gentiles and Jews. "If the casting away of them is the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be but life from the dead? . . . I would not, brethren, have you ignorant of this mystery, lest ye be wise in your own conceits, that a hardening in part hath befallen Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in; and so all Israel shall be saved."[1] Thus the picture of divine election with which the apostle closes his most stalwart passage on divine sovereignty is not that of a fast, hard, and perpetual division of men into two classes, but rather of an election that is subordinated to the greatest ultimate extension of the kingdom of grace that is possible. To discard this picture, and to place the whole stress upon an impassioned and rhetorical outburst, in which Paul seeks to rebuke the inflated claim of those who thought they had a special lien on God's favor because of ancestral connections, is to do manifest injustice to the apostle's thought; and this injustice is aggravated when his hard sayings are taken out of their connection and made to refer to the eternal destinies of men.

Two other passages of Paul are favorites with Calvinistic predestinarians, namely, Romans viii. 28–30, and Eph. i. 4–7. Neither of these, however, is necessarily interpreted in the interest of their special tenet. The former, designed to console and inspire suffering saints, is an elevated description of how the purpose, grace, and might of God are engaged to bear on the recipient of the divine calling from one stage to another, until at length the state of glorification and perfect conformity to the image of His Son has been reached. It emphasizes the greatness and perfection of God's agency in the process of salvation, and apprises us that the heavenly height is attainable, not because men have the ability to scale that height, but because God has a complete scheme of gracious workings for bringing them thereto. The aim of the

[1] Rom. xi. 15, 25.

apostle is to beget a comforting reliance upon the perfection of that scheme. It is as if he had said: As surely as one standing upon the earth is certain to be borne by its revolution from sunset to sunrise, so surely will one who stands within the scheme of God's gracious workings be borne through the whole scale of spiritual progress from calling to glorification. Here lies the whole stress of the representation. Paul does not say that any one is thrust into this divine scheme, and kept there by an irresistible decree. Quite as little does he say that any one is kept out by such a decree. In other connections, as will be shown later, he indicates that it is the unfeigned will of God that every one should so respond to the gospel message as to gain a footing within the scheme of salvation. His statement that those are predestinated who are foreknown leaves room for the supposition that man's agency, though utterly incompetent by itself to reach the lofty result in prospect, is nevertheless a conditioning factor in the attainment of the result. The placing of foreknowledge before predestination is an Arminian collocation of words; and there is no reason why an Arminian should not view this passage with entire complacency. Even if it be concluded that to "foreknow" means here to foreknow in the favoring sense, nothing compels to the conclusion that the favor must be regarded as arbitrarily fastening upon selected individuals. A similar line of remark applies to Eph. i. 4–7. If we emphasize at its worth the fact that the scheme of man's recovery in all its stages is the sovereign device of God, that the grace contained therein is His free gift, and that the preparation of individuals for a suitable response at a given time to the gospel message is very largely the product of providential ordering rather than of personal choice, we give an adequate range to the foreordination which is mentioned in this passage. Nothing in the language employed requires us to suppose that the apostle was thinking of an absolutely unconditional foreordination to an eternal destiny.

The next group of passages which naturally comes under review in connection with this theme is that contained in the writings of John. In the sixth chapter of his Gospel the statement is made several times that coming unto the Son is by the gift and drawing of the Father. Doubtless a theological imagination of a special type can discover in this representation a token of unconditional election and irresistible grace. But a sufficient meaning can be found short of such an interpretation. As has been stated, free will, though a real factor in determining the final result, is not to be regarded as independent of a demand for a process ; and accordingly a large scope can be given to a providential ordering and discipline in preparing its subject for the right response to divine overtures. Unless one be drawn on by this antecedent preparation, and be rendered plastic and receptive thereby, the word of grace, though uttered by one speaking as never man spoke, may have little chance of genuine acceptance. In this sense the drawing of the Father must precede the coming to the Son, and the coming to the Son is a token that the drawing of the Father has been fully consummated. That men are brought to final judgment without having been made the subjects of such a drawing as might avail, and in the divine purpose is meant to avail, for a saving union with the Son, is not intimated in the Johannine writings. On the contrary, as will be shown presently, these writings contain expressions which distinctly imply that God's seeking love goes out after all men.

Several Johannine sentences emphasize strongly the affectionate relation between Christ and his faithful followers ; but there is small occasion to read into them the technical doctrine of election. This applies to the parable of the good shepherd, wherein a striking picture is given of the fidelity with which Christ guards His own.[1] His declaration that His sheep shall

[1] John x. 27–29.

never be allowed to perish, if taken unqualifiedly, would indeed render support to the doctrine of perseverance. Whether this is the proper sense of the declaration, or not, need not be determined here. The pertinent question is whether men are brought by an unconditional decree into the relation of true discipleship, or that spiritual rapport with Christ wherein they will obediently hear His voice. It is needless to say that the passage gives no hint of such a decree. No more does it hint that the safety of those outside the circle of believing disciples is of no real concern to Christ. The predestinarian who finds such a meaning here, or in the special prayer which Christ offered for His disciples on the eve of His betrayal,[1] must have forgotten the scene of His weeping over rebellious Jerusalem, as well as the import of many sayings which bespeak His world-embracing sympathy. It is in truth a shocking perversion to take the words of lavish affection which He spoke concerning His disciples as an index of an exclusive love for a selected portion of the race. The nature which had such a wealth of love as the words indicate could not be indifferent toward winning any man to loving fellowship. The reason of the case corresponds with a record like that, for example, in the fifteenth chapter of Luke's Gospel.

The few passages outside of the Pauline and the Johannine writings that can be quoted for the predestinarian dogma with any show of propriety[2] do not need for the most part to be considered in detail, since they add nothing to the passages already cited, and are explained on the same general principles. The purpose of the parabolic veiling of truth, as set forth particularly in the strong language of Mark iv. 11, 12, need not be thought to mean, at the most, anything more than Paul saw in the temporary rejection of Israel. The words may be considered as expressing the immediate, not the ultimate, aim ;

[1] John xvii. 9. The same prayer, in xvii. 21, reaches out to the world.

[2] Matt. xiii. 13–15, xxii. 14, xxiv. 22, 24; Mark iv. 11, 12; Luke viii. 10; Acts xiii. 48; 1 Pet. i. 1, 2.

the present withholding being indeed in a sense retributive, but yet so far from involving a final sentence against the dull hearers that the disciples were doubtless being trained to bear to them a further message. A less strong significance may of course be attached to this item, if the report in Matthew (xiii. 12, 13) be taken as the standard, for in that, in place of a word expressive of purpose (ἵνα), we have a phrase indicative of ground or occasion (διὰ τοῦτο ὅτι). The verbal affiliation of Acts xiii. 48 with predestinarianism is very incomplete evidence for the technical Augustinian or Calvinistic tenet. The language indicates, very likely, that the writer conceived that the divine ordering was the preëminent factor in bringing about the faith and salvation of the Gentiles who, in that instance, believed. He was not ready to explain their salutary conduct on purely human grounds. But does that import that he did not make human self-determination any real factor in the case? The proof is wanting that he had an absolute decree in mind, or that he meant to say that those who did not then and there believe were forever excluded from salvation. It is simply incredible that he designed to affirm as much as that. A failure of scantily instructed men to improve a first opportunity is no absolute proof that no opportunity will be improved. So perfectly obvious is this, that we seem to be required to take the words in question with a qualification. Perhaps we shall not err in supposing them to represent an inexact way of saying that a number showed by their faith that they were ordained unto eternal life.

That the advocate of the traditional predestinarianism is guilty of an exegetical illusion may be argued from the fact that the writers to whom he appeals most are the very ones who declare most emphatically the universality of God's gracious purpose. Paul certainly is very pronounced upon this point. In the fifth chapter of Romans he draws a comparison between the harmful work of Adam and the salutary work of Christ. A leading aim of that comparison was evidently to

glorify the work of the obedient Christ as a full offset to the disobedience of Adam. Indeed he asserts that the justification offered through the one was meant to be as universal as the condemnation occasioned by the other, if not in truth to overmatch it. The tone of the passage indicates that Paul would have considered it a slander against the largeness of God's grace, if one had interrupted him with the suggestion that the area of possible salvation through Christ was fenced in and contracted, as compared with that of condemnation through Adam. Again he speaks of Christ as dying for all, and describes the gospel ministry as designed of God to reconcile the world unto Himself.[1] Finally, according to the record of the Pastoral Epistles, he makes these broad statements respecting the universality of the divine purpose and provision: "This is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour; who willeth that all men should be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth, for, there is one God, one mediator also between God and men, Himself man, Christ Jesus, who gave Himself a ransom for all."[2] "The grace of God hath appeared bringing salvation to all men."[3]

The language of John vies with that of Paul in proclaiming that the plan of salvation was a world-embracing scheme, designed to set an open door of opportunity before every man. No note of an absolute discrimination against a part of the race is heard in such sentences as these: "God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish, but have eternal life. For God sent not the Son into the world to judge the world; but that the world should be saved through Him."[4] "If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: and He is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the whole world."[5] "We have beheld and bear

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[1] 2 Cor. v. 15, 19.
[2] 1 Tim. ii. 4–6.
[3] Titus ii. 11.
[4] John iii. 16, 17.
[5] 1 John ii. 1, 2.

witness that the Father hath sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world."[1] "The Spirit and the bride say, Come. And he that is athirst, let him come: he that will, let him take of the water of life freely."[2]

In the Epistle to the Hebrews Christ is represented as "tasting death for every man";[3] and through the New Testament there runs the general assumption that the gospel is to be preached to all, and that every man is under positive obligation believingly to accept for himself the overtures of salvation contained therein. Predestinarians do not deny the fact that it is a part of the divine procedure to summon all men to the exercise of that faith with which is connected the promise of salvation. They are obliged, therefore, to admit that God authorizes a universal offer and imposes a universal obligation of acceptance, while yet He has made only a limited provision, and has no wish or intention that all men should avail themselves of the gracious overtures. How do they explain and justify this incongruity? They cannot explain it, except by a denial of their own premises. No human subtlety is adequate to justify a picture of God which represents Him as holding a universal offer in an outstretched hand, and keeping all the time in the hand behind His back a sentence of nullification against its universality. The self-contradiction in which Hodge becomes entangled may be taken as an index of the insuperable difficulty with which the predestinarian wrestles at this point. On the one hand he says: "This general call of the gospel is not inconsistent with the doctrine of predestination. All the call contains is true. The plan of salvation is designed for all men. It is adapted to the condition of all. It makes abundant provision for the salvation of all. The promise of acceptance on the condition of faith is made to all. And the motives and reasons which should constrain obedience are brought to bear on every mind to which the call is sent."[4]

[1] 1 John iv. 14. [2] Rev. xxii. 17. [3] Heb. ii. 9.
[4] Systematic Theology, Pt. III. Chap. XIV. § 2.

But on the other hand, he teaches explicitly that Christ died for only a part of the race, that God designs to apply effectual grace to only an elect portion, that this effectual grace works regeneration in the mode of an omnipotent power, and that the common grace which is given to men generally is not sufficient to raise the spiritually dead, that is, to accomplish regeneration.[1] Now, from this line of representation, it follows inevitably that if all men are solicited to appropriate the benefits of Christ's death some must be solicited to take what has no existence for them; and if all are exhorted to become truly the children of God through conversion and regeneration, then some must be urged to that for which there are no available resources in the universe. In the face of such implications, what truth or propriety is there in saying that the plan of salvation is adapted to the condition of all? It has neither adaptation nor existence for a part of the race. If the positions which are defended by Hodge through elaborate chapters are true, the eternal plan of God as regards the non-elect is simply a plan of non-salvation, not to say of damnation.

An artificial verbal advantage in scriptural interpretation may be secured by those predestinarians who say that Christ died for all, though God has no intention of applying the benefits of His death to others than the subjects of His unconditional choice. But, as has been noticed already, such a representation is self-cancelling. A purpose that Christ should die for all, followed by such total indifference to some that they are consigned to eternal perdition, although they could be saved without any violence to their moral nature, as the advocates of the theory are compelled by their own premises to admit, is a palpable contradiction. A purpose that permits such an outcome cannot be considered expressive of a divine principle or disposition, and is utterly empty of reality.

Of the predestinarian exegesis in general it may be said

[1] Systematic Theology, Pt. III. Chap. VIII. § 2, Chap. XIV. §§ 3, 4, Chap. XV. § 3.

that it lacks the sense of perspective. As the ultra sacerdotal theory discards the warp and woof of the Bible in favor of the most extreme meaning that can be put into a few rhetorical sentences, so the dogma of unconditional election rests upon an extreme interpretation of a few passages. The Bible as a whole most certainly contemplates men as candidates for a real history, and not simply as parts of a necessitated evolution.

If we consider the circumstances under which predestinarianism was born, we shall find considerable ground for a suspicion of onesidedness. It was foreign to the thought of the first four centuries. Not a single Catholic writer of those centuries was its advocate. It arose out of controversial heat, and represented the reaction of an intense mind against an exaggerated theory of human ability. Augustine, who was the first to give it a place in patristic literature, did not hold it in the earlier part of his theological career, as he has himself confessed. He was led to its advocacy in the course of his impassioned struggle against Pelagianism. It represents the revolt of his mind from that superficial creed. It was the opposite swing of the pendulum. Some approaches to it may indeed have been made in the thinking of Augustine before the contest with Pelagianism: but it was the pressure of that contest which urged him on to a distinct and uncompromising advocacy of it.

A like ground of suspicion of onesidedness is afforded by the circumstances under which the predestinarian dogma gained a place in Protestant theology. The Reformers were confronted by a stupendous scheme of legality, an overgrown mechanism of ecclesiastical appliances, a complex system for measuring, weighing, and portioning out merits. The most ready expedient for sweeping aside all this trumpery, as it seemed to them, was to recur to the Augustinian principle; that is, to disparage human merit, to rule it out of the category of possible attainment before the divine tribunal, and to rest all upon the sovereign determination of God. The bale-

ful extreme against which they were contending drove them, in the first instance, to an extreme standpoint on the other side. At least, a review of the conditions favors the opinion that this may have been the case. And the after history is rather confirmatory than otherwise of this opinion. The Lutherans soon modified their original position. In the Reformed Church, on account of the masterful influence of Calvin, rectification came more slowly. But at length a fruitful reaction was inaugurated by the Arminians in Holland, and each generation witnesses a relative loss of real faith in Calvinistic predestinarianism. Such is the tenor of the historical argument. It does not amount to proof; but it does give a measure of credibility to the conclusion that the technical doctrine of predestination represents a one-sided development.

Rational objections to this doctrine may be summed up in its contrariety to both the justice and the love of God. It is contrary to divine justice; for, if men are born, as is assumed, with a bent to sin, if regenerating grace is necessary to overcome this evil bent, if this grace is denied to a certain portion of the race, and if Christ did not die to bring it or any other essential of eternal life to that portion, then to condemn them for lack of repentance, of faith, or of any other requisite of salvation, is an act that is wanting in all righteous consistency, an exercise of sheer despotism. That which, to the individual, is absolutely unavoidable cannot in justice be charged to his account. An inability which comes by birth is just the same to him as though it came by immediate creation, and can no more be made a ground of responsibility in the former case than in the latter. As well condemn Adam for the meanness of the clay out of which his body was fashioned as to condemn anyone for that which is purely a matter of inheritance from Adam.[1] Accordingly, when the predestinarian says that in

[1] See the discussion of original sin, Part III. Chap. II. Sect. IX.

the sight of God Adam's sin involved all men in condemnation, and that God was pleased to leave some in that condemnation, while He graciously delivered others, he simply enlarges the circuit through which the divine arbitrariness is supposed to run. He does not make the arbitrariness one whit less than it would appear in the declaration that God creates men with a moral deficit, and then condemns them to eternal punishment because of the deficit.

The modified Calvinism, which assumes a *natural* ability in men, as distinguished from a *moral*, to turn to holy choices, in other words, to regenerate themselves, cannot be regarded as satisfactorily evading the objection under consideration. Not to mention the very poor warrant for the idea of self-regeneration, and the suspicious character of an ability that is never once exercised, this type of predestinarianism rather secures the formal notion of justice in one particular, than renders to justice its whole due as a divine disposition. If it does not picture God as condemning men for the absolutely impossible, it does represent Him as arbitrarily discriminating against some, in that He withholds from them influences which He knows would certainly be effective for their salvation, since He is able beyond all shadow of contingency to save those whom He elects.

Nothing is more grievous in the predestinarian theory than the way in which it shadows the love of God. Between love as nature or disposition, and an arbitrary choice of its beneficiaries, there is an irreconcilable antithesis. To assign to love its direction by fiat is to displace the very notion of love, and to put caprice in its stead. Suppose a father standing upon the deck of a ship should see his children struggling in the sea, in imminent peril of drowning. In the worth or worthiness of the children there is no ground of discrimination. The father has ample means to save all, for a plenty of life-preservers is immediately at hand. But instead of saving all he casts means of rescue to only two out of four, thus leav-

ing half of his children to sink into the depths. Who would ascribe parental love to such a father? His unnatural conduct denies the very conception, and leaves in view only mad caprice and appalling eccentricity. It is not the nature of a holy love to be subject to arbitrariness any more than it is the nature of sunlight to fill only selected portions of an open expanse.

Predestinarians are wont to descant on the special love of God, as though a love which is entirely independent of the relative worthiness of its objects, and passes by some to fasten exclusively upon others, constitutes a pleasing mystery. However, a love of this kind belongs to a pathological condition. It is quite possible to limited beings in whom feeling and reason are not necessarily in true coördination. But to impute it to God, whose feeling never outruns His all-perfect intelligence, is without any rational warrant. The differing measures of His love must be supposed to correspond to the differing realities of its objects. He is not liable to untruth in His feeling any more than He is liable to error in His intellectual perceptions.

It may be thought that the analogy of nature is rather in line than otherwise with the predestinarian hypothesis, since only a few out of many germs are favored with the proper conditions of growth and maturity. But beings who are said to have been created in the image of God, and who are capable of being exalted to the plane of true spiritual sonship, are not proper subjects for such an economy as belongs to the lower forms of life. An analogy far more binding upon our thought lies close at hand. As the earthly parent is not entitled to think lightly of the welfare of any of his children, so it may be concluded that He who is represented as the Father in heaven does not indifferently or arbitrarily leave a part of the race outside the possibility of salvation.

We conclude then that the evidence is decidedly on the side of the universality of God's gracious purpose, or that it belongs

to His plan to grant to all men a real opportunity to appropriate the salvation provided in Christ.

II. — The Human Conditions of Appropriation.

Among the conditions of the appropriation of salvation there can be no doubt that faith holds the primacy in the New Testament representation. It stands at the front in Paul's discourses, being powerfully commended as the source of emancipation from legal bondage, the means of vital connection with the Redeemer, the instrument for laying hold upon all the priceless gifts which God offers to men through His Son.[1] In the writings of John, if not commended at equal length, it is described in no less emphatic terms as a fundamental condition of salvation.[2] It is assigned, implicitly or explicitly, the same fundamental position in numerous passages of other New Testament books.[3] The teaching of the Old Testament on this subject lacks the definiteness and incisiveness of the New, but, nevertheless, does not fail to emphasize strongly the office of faith in relation to the attainment of divine blessings.[4]

While the primacy is given to faith among the conditions of salvation, it is not to be overlooked that repentance receives not a little stress;[5] and also that obedience is very closely associated with the appropriation of the benefits which are set

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[1] Rom. i. 16, 17, iii. 21–31, iv., v. 1, 2, ix. 30–32, x. 3–11, xi. 20, 23; Gal. ii. 16, 20, iii., v. 4–6; 1 Cor. i. 21; Eph. ii. 8, iii. 12, 17; Phil. iii. 9.

[2] John i. 12, iii. 15, 18, 36, vi. 29, 47, vii. 39, xx. 29; 1 John iii. 23, v. 4, 5, 10.

[3] Matt. xviii. 3–6, xxi. 22, 32; Mark i. 15, x. 15, xi. 24; Luke viii. 11, 12; Acts xiii. 39, xv. 9, xvi. 31; Heb. iv. 2, 3, x. 39 xi. 6; 1 Pet. i. 8, 9.

[4] Gen. xv. 6; Num. xx. 12; Deut. i. 32–36; Ps. xiii. 5, xxii. 4, 5, xxxiv. 22, xxxvii. 3–7, xl. 4, lv. 22, lxxviii. 22, lxxxiv. 12; Prov. iii. 5, xvi. 3; Jer. xvii. 5–8; Isa. vii. 9, x. 20, xii. 2, xxvi. 3, 4, xxviii. 16, xxx. 15, 18, xl. 31, xliii. 10, xlv. 24, 25, li. 7, 8, lv. 3.

[5] Matt. iv. 17; Mark i. 15; Luke v. 32, xv. 7, 10, 18–21, xviii. 13, 14, 17, xxiv. 47; Acts ii. 38, iii. 19. Compare Ps. xxxiv. 18; Isa. lv. 7, lvii. 15.

before men in the gospel.[1] Somewhat of the same association is given to confession;[2] but there is little occasion to award it a distinct place, since it falls under repentance, when used to denote a heartfelt acknowledgement of sins before God, and under obedience, or the practical fulfillment of the gospel code, when used to signify an open and loyal declaration of faith in Christ and of adherence to Him in the bonds of discipleship. As for the special injunction in the Epistle of James (v. 16), it implies that a mutual confession of faults among brethren may be helpful, as affording a ground of mutual sympathy and of earnest prayer in each other's behalf. It points accordingly rather to a desirable means of joint edification and brotherly ministering than to a necessary condition of the individual's acceptance before God. Still less is it needful to assign a distinct place to hope,[3] since hope is but an aspect of faith, the animated and trustful glance of the soul toward some promised good. In one sense love may be regarded as the maximum condition of salvation, since it names the highest obligation that is imposed upon the human spirit. But love is the highest good as well as the highest obligation, and so is in a large sense identical with salvation. All exercise of love in the form of complacency is pure blessedness. On account of this relation of love to the consummating stage of personal attainment and fruition, a motive is supplied, in enumerating the conditions of salvation, to place the maximum stress upon those activities which prepare the ground for the upspringing of love. Still, it cannot be completely shut out from the character of a condition, since every spiritual value grows by use, and one measure of love provides for a larger, even as Christ declared, "Whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have abundance."[4]

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[1] Matt. vii. 21–27, x. 38, 39, xvi. 24, 25, xxv. 14–46; Mark viii. 34, 35, x. 21; Luke ix. 23, 24, xiv. 27; John viii. 31, 32, 51, xiv. 23, 24, xv. 10; 1 John ii. 3–6; James i. 21, 27, ii. 14–26.

[2] 1 John i. 9; Matt. x. 32; Luke xii. 8; Rom. x. 9, 10; 1 John iv. 15.

[3] Rom. viii. 24.

[4] Matt. xiii. 12.

We emphasize then repentance and obedience as the secondary conditions of salvation. That both are secondary to faith is sufficiently evident. Repentance, as including sorrow for the imperfection of past conduct and character and a purpose of amendment, presupposes and is grounded in faith. The feeling of sorrow over the soiled and imperfect implies the apprehension of a pure and obligatory ideal, and the purpose to turn from the former implies some measure of inward assent to the latter. But to speak of the apprehension of an obligatory ideal, joined with a measure of inward assent thereto, is to speak of faith. Thus it appears that faith is the more fundamental, the logical antecedent of repentance. It is true that a different view might be suggested by this saying of Christ: "John came unto you in the way of righteousness, and ye believed him not: but the publicans and the harlots believed him; and ye, when ye saw it, did not even repent yourselves afterward that ye might believe him."[1] These words, however, though they may imply a close connection between a penitent self-abasement and faith of an effective sort, cannot be regarded as teaching a logical antecedence of repentance in general to faith. The meaning is that the Pharisees needed to come down to the plane of a genuine and penitent humility before they could reach the goal of a true faith, not that an incipient faith could be dispensed with in bringing them down to that plane. The position of faith is basal; but since all spiritual activities are closely interwoven, or mutually conditioning, faith cannot be largely operative in a subject of redemption apart from the disposition which is denoted by repentance. The man who closes his eyes to the demerits of his sins is not in condition to look with lively faith to Him who came to take away his sins. If it is true that the contemplation of the atoning Saviour is needed to produce a proper consciousness of sin, a vital sense of personal unworthiness,

[1] Matt. xxi. 32.

it is also true that a penitent recognition of sin is an incentive to an earnest contemplation.

A like order of considerations applies to obedience, viewed as a practical fulfillment of evangelical precepts. Faith is the logical antecedent of obedience. It is itself a kind of fundamental inward obedience, as being the act and the attitude of self-surrender to a superior object of trust and obligation. As such it prepares the way for the fulfillment in detail of divine precepts. But, while arising from faith, obedience reacts upon its source. Just as energy of will needs for its development, besides the general choice of an end, a pursuit of that end through all the difficulties and obstacles which are met in close contact with men and nature, so faith needs to go out into the details of righteous conduct to reach the proper measure of strength and robustness.

Good works may be regarded as but another name for obedience, as the term is here employed. From what has been said it follows that they cannot be considered coördinate with faith in the ground of salvation. Important vehicles they are for the expression of faith and for its development through a congenial exercise; but as specific acts can never be placed in the moral scale on a parity with the inner disposition which is their vital source, so works can never be coördinate with faith in the ground of divine acceptance. The all-penetrating glance of God sees the faith, which is the motive power and guarantee of right works, the moment it arises. God has the right man, the man right at heart, in that moment. To assume, then, that He cannot accept him till after the performance of a definite quantum of works, is to assume that God is not content with the right man, and holds him off from favor until a prescribed appendage has been added — a notion that can pass only with those who have lost the sense for reality, and have transformed God into a narrow and technical being. The man who has the right inner disposition is already a son of God. He may need development in the character which

belongs to this sacred relation; but he is within the circle of sonship. On the other hand, the man who is destitute of this disposition does not get into that circle by any amount of performances which fall short of ethical self-surrender. His performances may indeed become an obstacle to his admission, in so far as they minister to a conceit of self-righteousness. Works that are good and wholesome in themselves, not to mention the eccentric expedients of an ambitious asceticism, may have this result through the perverting influence of a false confidence in them.

Since faith takes the initiative and repentance and evangelical obedience stand in a dependent relation thereto, it is evidently permissible in general references to the subject to speak of faith as *the condition* of salvation. It is *the sole condition* in the sense that nothing else is coördinate with itself. But since repentance and evangelical obedience are closely connected with faith, and react upon it for its perfecting, if we look beyond the mere beginning, the initial act of union with God, these two may fitly be mentioned as secondary conditions of salvation. They must be interwoven with faith in the truly progressive spiritual life, and only such a life is secure against reversion into spiritual barrenness.

The nature of faith has been intimated in the foregoing discussion of its primacy among the conditions of salvation. In its religious use the term denotes not merely intellectual assent, but also self-committal or trust. It signifies an act, or better, an attitude, of trustful self-committal to an object with which, to a greater or less degree, a superior or ideal character is associated. The proper ideal, which constitutes the ultimate object of faith, is a Divine Person. It is not any collection of sayings or instructions. These may direct thought to a Divine Person and assist reason and imagination to frame a mental picture of Him. But in the nature of the case they can be only a secondary object of faith. When a living faith has arisen in a Divine Person, then, by necessary consequence,

there follows reliance upon that which has rational warrant for being regarded as representative of His thought or good-pleasure. Faith in the Bible can be, in advance of trust in the God who is back of the Bible, only superficial and conventional. The greater here includes the less. Hearty reliance upon God first prepares for genuine repose upon His oracles. Through trustful self-surrender to a personal will we are made ready to rely upon everything which is approved to us as an authentic manifestation of that will.

In its general theistic sense, faith is an ethical bearing toward the Supreme Being, an attitude toward Him of trustful self-committal or self-surrender. In its specifically Christian sense it is an attitude of trust and self-surrender toward God as revealed in Jesus Christ. Viewed as to its essential character, faith is the same in the one relation as in the other. But since the revelation in Christ brings God peculiarly near, and gives the consummate expression of His grace and love, it naturally solicits to the largest, deepest, and most tender reliance upon God. In spiritual potency, therefore, the specifically Christian faith must be regarded as outranking all other.

Is faith in this sense necessary to salvation? Not strictly, since otherwise the Old Testament saints must have fallen short of being saved. The specifically Christian faith is doubtless incumbent upon those who have the opportunity to exercise it, and is universally a requisite for saved men, in the sense that sooner or later everyone of them must confess the mediatorial position and lordship of Jesus Christ. But a trustful self-surrender to the highest ideal that is known is not a bad pledge of the same kind of a surrender to the highest ideal in fact, when that shall become known. The one who makes the former surrender is on the right path, and, if he does not turn back, will undoubtedly emerge into the full light and liberty of the children of God. The theory which shuts out the heathen *en masse* from the possibility of salvation,

because of their lack of faith in its specifically Christian character, reflects too seriously on the equity and mercy of God to be tolerated for a moment.

In defining faith as an ethical bearing, or an attitude of trustful self-surrender, in relation to a Divine Person, we have not used the terms employed in the one formal definition which is given in the Scriptures. The difference, however, is not in the line of contrariety but only of compass. The definition in Heb. xi. 1 is restricted to a particular aspect of faith, namely, the grasp which it has upon a promised good, or a reality which is testified to rather than seen. From this point of view it may be described as "a firm confidence in regard to that which is hoped for, a being convinced of things which are invisible." Evidently back of this confidence in promise or testimony must be the confiding attitude toward the Divine Person who promises or testifies.

From the nature of faith it follows that it stands in a friendly relation with knowledge, rather than in sharp contrast. Some degree of knowledge is necessary to the existence of faith, and increase of knowledge furnishes a favorable ground for an increase of faith, since God is an ideal that will stand investigation, and increasing knowledge of Him tends to intensify the spirit of trustful self-surrender. On the other hand, faith is a medium of inward experience, and so of religious knowledge. Thus the two work together for mutual advancement. Accordingly an eminent representative of Roman Catholic theology must be regarded as greatly distorting the true notion of faith, when he says that it is simply assent of mind to whatever God proposes to us as an object of belief, whether it is understood by us or not, and is better defined by ignorance than by knowledge.[1] This is little short of caricature. The truth is, faith denotes a fundamental bearing of the moral personality toward God, a trustful self-sur-

[1] Bellarmin, De Justif., Lib. i. Chap. 5, 7.

Doesn't put proper emphasis upon conviction of sin

render of a human to a Divine Person, rather than an assent to enigmas, and is in intimate association with knowledge.

III. — Salvation in its Objective Aspect, or Justification with its Accompaniment of Adoption and Heirship.

From a consideration of the instrumentality of faith we naturally pass at once to an analysis of the idea of salvation, or the benefit which faith appropriates. In an analysis of this kind the distinction which first comes to view is that between an objective and a subjective aspect. The former is expressed preëminently by the term justification, with which may also be associated adoption and heirship.

In the New Testament the Pauline writings are more largely and directly occupied with the theme of justification than are any others. It is fitting, then, to begin with Paul's conception of justification, and later to note how far other New Testament references are in line with that conception.

It was the verdict of early Protestant theology that Paul used the word justification (δικαίωσις, δικαιοῦν) in the objective or judicial sense, denoting thereby not the inner quality of its subject but his standing with God as being freed from condemnation. That this verdict was the true one is very largely the conclusion of free scholarship in the present, that is, of scholarship which is not under the constraint of an inflexible ecclesiastical authority. It may be accepted as representing the actual usage of the apostle, provided the intimate association between the objective and subjective phase of salvation which subsisted in his thought is not overlooked. This interpretation rests upon no technical etymological ground, but is involved in the texture of the Pauline argument.

In the first place, the objective sense is implied by the Pauline sentences respecting the impossibility of justification

by the works of the law, sentences which, taken in the aggregate, indicate that justification in this way is impossible simply because the law will always condemn men on the score of an imperfect fulfillment of its precepts. The failure of the legal method to bring justification is thus identified with the condemnation or curse of the law.[1] But if lack of justification is made to signify condemnation, it is quite clear that justification is designed to signify an approving sentence on the part of God, or a standing in His favor.

In the second place, evidence that Paul attached an objective sense to the term is found in sentences which place justification in direct antithesis with condemnation. "Being, therefore justified by faith let us have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ."[2] "Not as through one that sinned, so also is the free gift: for the judgment came of one unto condemnation, but the free gift came of many trespasses unto justification."[3] "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth; who is he that shall condemn? It is Christ Jesus that died, yea rather, that was raised from the dead, who is at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us."[4]

In the third place, Paul's use of the term "reckon" or "impute" (λογίζομαι) in connections where justification was the theme of discussion implies that he attached to justification the judicial or objective meaning. Here belong passages of such unequivocal sense as these: "What saith the Scripture? And Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned unto him for righteousness. Now to him that worketh, the reward is not reckoned as of grace, but as of debt. But to him that worketh not, but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is reckoned for righteousness. Even as David also pronounceth blessing upon the man, unto whom God reckoneth

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[1] Compare Rom. iii. 20 and Gal ii. 16 with Gal. iii. 10, 11.
[2] Rom. v. 1. [3] Rom. v. 16. [4] Rom. viii. 33, 34.

righteousness apart from works, saying, Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not reckon sin."[1] "Now it was not written for his sake alone that it was reckoned unto him; but for our sake also, unto whom it shall be reckoned, who believe on Him that raised Jesus our Lord from the dead."[2] "Even as Abraham believed God and it was reckoned unto him for righteousness. Know then that they which be of faith, the same are the sons of Abraham."[3]

Coinciding with the evidence for the objective sense which is furnished in the tenor of Paul's representations is the fact that preceding and contemporary Jewish usage was accommodated to that sense. In the Septuagint, δικαιοῦν is employed generally, not to say exclusively, in the objective significance. It has this significance also in the pseudepigraphic writings, such as the Psalms of Solomon, Fourth Ezra, and the Apocalypse of Baruch.[4]

A natural association with justification belongs to Paul's expression, "the righteousness of God," in so far as it is used by him to indicate a righteousness antithetical to that of the law and graciously bestowed upon man.[5] In its fundamental idea this righteousness seems to denote an approved standing with God. It is God's righteousness in the sense that He is its author, the source whence comes the sentence which takes a man out from a state of condemnation and consequent spiritual deprivation. It is made man's righteousness in the sense that by his faith he is set in the relation of an approved child of God, and given a title to all the benefits which belong with that relation.[6]

As respects the attainment of justification, Paul leaves no

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[1] Rom. iv. 3–8.

[2] Rom. iv. 23, 24.

[3] Gal. iii. 6, 7.

[4] Sanday, Comm. on Romans, p. 31.

[5] See Rom. i. 17, iii. 21, 22; x. 3; 2 Cor. v. 21; Phil. iii. 9.

[6] Compare Pfleiderer, Das Urchristenthum, pp. 251, 252; Holtzmann, Neutest. Theol. II. 126–130; Stevens, The Theology of the New Testament, pp. 420, 421.

doubt as to the preëminent, we may say exclusive, instrumentality of faith. The passages already referred to furnish complete proof that he allowed nothing to be coördinate with faith in this matter. As for works, they are excluded from the ground of justification by the whole tenor of his argument, as well as by such sentences as these: "Now apart from the law a righteousness of God hath been manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets, even the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ unto all them that believe. . . . We reckon, therefore, that a man is justified by faith apart from the works of the law."[1] By the law in such connections Paul evidently understood the whole content of the ethical code as well as of the ceremonial. His declarations, therefore, amount to an absolute denial of the possibility of justification by works on the part of man as he is actually conditioned.

Excluding works in this decisive fashion from the ground of justification, Paul evidently did not think of faith as a kind of inner work of such peculiar value as to merit justification. On the contrary, he conceived of justification by faith as distinctly antithetical to justification on the score of merits. He viewed it as the method of grace, the way in which God's *free gift* was imparted, and so describes it when he speaks of "being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus."[2] In his thought faith was not so much the meritorious or procuring cause of justification as a condition, clemently and graciously appointed by God, of receiving the pardon and sonship which are made available unto men through the redemptive economy.

Still it is not necessary to assume that Paul ignored or lightly rated the religious worth of faith. He could conceive with perfect consistency both that faith holds a high place in the scale of religious dispositions, and that no disposition of which a sinful man is capable can earn the priceless treasure

[1] Rom. iii. 21, 22, 28. Compare Gal. ii. 16. [2] Rom. iii. 24.

of acceptance with God and heirship to eternal life. In fact, faith in the sense of the apostle is a very vital thing, a potentiality of righteousness, if not in its own virtue, at least in virtue of its intrinsic connections. It is viewed as uniting its subject so intimately with the atoning Saviour that the experience of the latter in suffering, crucifixion, and resurrection becomes in a measure the experience of the former. It brings into a relation where the old life of sin is an utter anomaly. "We who died to sin, how shall we any longer live therein?"[1] While apparently ignoring the pathway of legal requirement, and turning from it to repose on the free grace of God, faith after all enthrones the law by planting a new principle of obedience in the heart. "Do we then make the law of none effect through faith? God forbid; nay, we establish the law."[2]

Though strongly emphasizing the free grace of God in justification, Paul was not so grudging of compliment to faith but that he could speak of it as being imputed for righteousness, that is, in God's generous and compassionate economy. Herein he stands in contrast with the Westminster divines, who, probably with the view of censuring an Arminian representation, went in the face of Paul's phraseology by asserting that faith is not imputed as righteousness to those who believe in Christ.[3] In their view the true statement is that the righteousness of Christ is imputed. But Paul never speaks of this kind of imputation, and it is doubtful if he affords a proper ground for inferring it. "The representation," says Weiss, "that God imputes to man the righteousness of Christ is not Pauline."[4] Enough is conceded to the notion of imputation when it is granted that, within the economy of grace founded through the atoning work of Christ, faith, as self-surrendering trust in the Redeemer, is compassionately allowed to introduce to the

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[1] Rom. vi. 2. [2] Rom. iii. 31. [3] Confession, Chap. XI.

[4] Bib. Theol. des Neuen Testaments, § 82, b. Note 3. Compare Bruce, St. Paul's Conception of Christianity, pp. 117–153.

benefits of that economy, that is, to full pardon and to filial communion with God.

The above exposition of Paul's theory amounts to a criticism of the Roman Catholic doctrine of justification. Besides including under the term justification the sanctification which in the usage characteristic of Paul holds simply the place of an inseparable accompaniment, the Roman Catholic theory is un-Pauline in the following particulars: (1) It exalts the efficacy and necessity of the sacraments, and especially of the sacrament of baptism in the attainment of justification. The apostle makes no reference to baptism in his whole discussion of the subject, except for an illustrative purpose, or in the same way that he alludes to the crucifixion, using the one as well as the other to symbolize the great transition through which one passes when he is united in faith to Christ. On the contrary, Bellarmin says: "The Catholic faith does not allow the grace of justification to be immediately apprehended by faith alone and applied to men, but wills that the sacraments also be necessarily required to this end, so that if faith exists in any one, though it be in the highest degree, it will not nevertheless justify unless the sacrament is received in fact or in desire."[1] In this Bellarmin but states a necessary inference from the authoritative decisions of the Council of Trent. (2) The Roman Catholic theory stands in contrast with the Pauline, not only in the prominence which it gives to the sacraments in the justifying process, but also in general declarations of the inadequacy of faith for justification. While Paul pictures faith as the open door to justification, the Tridentine doctors declare that the door of faith is not wide enough by itself to admit anyone, thus showing that either their conception of faith or their notion of its office was un-Pauline. (3) In the Roman Catholic theory good works are described as means of an increase of justification,

[1] De Sacramentis, Lib. i. Cap. 22.

and declared to merit, when performed by one in a state of grace, the highest benefits, not excepting eternal life. Paul knows nothing of this piecemeal progressive justification on the basis of works. The progress which he contemplates is that of one who has entered by faith into the consciousness of sonship, and who, instead of laboring to earn justification, lives out the effective spiritual impulses which have come to him in justification. (4) The Roman Catholic theory excludes the notion of a full pardon, and assumes that satisfaction must be rendered, either in this life or in purgatory, for every mortal sin committed after baptism, unless perchance an indulgence, the offspring of papal discretion, comes in to cancel the satisfaction due. It is not too much to say that this attachment of a clog to a forgiven and reconciled child of God is in glaring contrast to the tone of Paul's teaching, and could have been viewed by him only with disgust.

It may be granted that the wide contrast between the Roman Catholic theory and the Pauline is due in part to the different meaning and compass which they assign respectively to the term justification. But, after all due allowance has been made on this score, it must be admitted that the Roman Catholic theory brings in much of the legalism against which Paul urged his vehement polemic. Taken in the sum total of its specifications, it is to be described as sacerdotal and legal rather than evangelical; and its tendency is rather to create a consciousness of connection with a mechanism of divine-human appliances than that joyful consciousness of sonship which Paul conceived to spring directly out of justifying faith.

The scope and meaning assigned by Paul to faith imply that justification ensues as the result of a personal transaction with God. There is indeed a universal phase in the scheme of reconciliation. By the fact that the economy of grace is provided and published God is exhibited as reconciled to men in the sense that He has purposes of mercy rather than of

wrath toward them. But while the existence of the economy presents God in this general attitude, it does not banish the consideration that the economy may rather increase the condemnation of the individual than secure his actual reconciliation unless he fulfills the conditions which it contemplates. The fulfillment of these conditions is as distinctly individual and personal as any act can be. So Paul assumes it to be again and again. Ritschl's theory that justification is the property of the religious brotherhood or communion, as the recipient of the revelation of God in Christ, and that the individual partakes of justification in virtue of his inclusion in the communion, finds no support in the apostle's language. He assumes that Abraham was justified as an individual when he believed, and that his experience may be taken as a pattern in essential particulars of the way that each may hope to be justified.[1] He says, "Christ is the end of the law unto righteousness to every one that believeth;" and he follows up the declaration with this description of a thoroughly personal transaction, "With the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation."[2] He makes justification synchronous with an inner renovation, as though the same faith which procures the sentence of forgiveness must by its very nature bring into transforming relation with Christ, and thus indicates that in his thought justification was distinctly identified with the experience of believers in their individual capacity.[3]

Paul makes the objective ground of justification the atoning work of Christ which came to its culminating expression in His death. A very clear statement of this position is contained in Rom. iii. 24, 25; and it may be said to be woven into the texture of the Pauline Epistles.[4] It appears therefore

[1] Rom. v.; Gal. iii. 6, 7. [2] Rom. x. 4, 10.

[3] Rom. viii. 1, 2; 1 Cor. vi. 11; Gal. ii. 15–20.

[4] Rom. v. 6–8, 18, 19, viii. 3; 1 Cor. xv. 3; 2 Cor. v. 14, 15, 21; Gal. iii. 13; Eph. i. 7, v.; Col. i. 13, 14; 1 Thess. v. 9, 10; 1 Tim. ii. 5, 6.

aside from the general current of the apostle's thought when he specifies a distinct connection between the resurrection of Christ and justification.[1] Perhaps his meaning in this representation was that the resurrection conditioned justification as affording a necessary ground of faith in the atoning work of Christ as a whole. So many commentators infer. Says Meyer: "The resurrection of the sacrificed One was required to produce in man the faith through which alone the objective fact of the atoning offering of Jesus could have the effect of justification subjectively, because Christ is the 'propitiation through faith.' Without His resurrection therefore the atoning work of His death would have remained without subjective appropriation." Whatever may have been the precise thought of Paul in this connection, it savors of arbitrariness to take an infrequent representation, instead of one that enters into the very framework of his exposition of the Christian system, as supplying adequate data for determining his doctrine of justification.

If we pass from the Pauline writings to other portions of the New Testament, we discover no such distinct elaboration of the doctrine of justification as that which the apostle to the Gentiles has furnished; nevertheless the main elements of his theory are not sought in vain. James, it must be confessed, in his recorded views falls short of Paul's teaching. His main contention that a faith is dead which does not issue into works of righteousness is Pauline enough: but he is not at pains to closely define the function of works, and as a matter of fact leaves one free to assume that they are coördinate with faith in the ground or condition of justification — an assumption which Paul's theory does not tolerate. By supposing a different use of terms on the part of the two writers much can be done to modify the apparent contrast between their respective teachings; a deduction, however, of the characteristic doctrine

[1] Rom. iv. 25, x. 9.

of Paul from the language of James is quite out of the question. At least, it is not to be deduced from that paragraph in which the latter treats directly of justification.[1] A nearer approach to the Pauline platform appears in those sentences of his which emphasize the liberality of God, the descent of every good and perfect gift from Him, and the necessity of faith in effectively asking for these gifts.[2]

In the spirit and tenor of Christ's teachings, as recorded in the Gospels, there are very distinct anticipations of Paul's doctrine. The core of that doctrine is contained in the parable of the Pharisee and the publican,[3] only the parable puts the truth in a more popular form and with the coloring belonging to a Jewish rather than to a specifically Christian environment. Before the truth could be set forth in its distinctively Christian form, it was necessary that the full significance of Christ's mediatorial work should be in view. Naturally enough, then, Paul's terminology is wanting; his idea, however, that justification is God's gift to man's lowliness and faith, rather than wages granted in return for his performances, is clearly manifest in the parable. In the same line are declarations that whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child shall not enter therein.[4] A Pauline view is also anticipated in sentences which represent the life in union with Christ as rather a life of freedom and sonship than of servitude.[5] More directly in terms, though scarcely more truly in fact, Paul's doctrine is anticipated in passages which represent faith upon the Son as the medium of eternal life, or make unbelief the ground of condemnation. This point of view is more or less clearly discernible in various Epistles, as well as in the recorded discourses of Christ.[6]

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[1] James ii. 14–26. [2] James i. 5, 6, 17. [3] Luke xviii. 9–17.

[4] Matt. xviii. 3, 4; Mark x. 15; Luke xviii. 17.

[5] John viii. 36, 37, xv. 15.

[6] John iii. 15, 18, 36, vi. 29, 47; 1 John v. 10; 1 Pet. i. 8, 9; Heb. iv. 2, 3, x. 39.

If Paul's theory is to be described as agreeable in its essence to New Testament thought, it must also be characterized as consistent with sound philosophy. It is certainly not open to the charge of being artificial or arbitrary. Supposing an economy of grace, self-surrendering faith or trust in the Divine Person who represents the economy is the rational requirement for approval. A faith of this kind is intrinsically a pledge and potency of a new life, such as it is worthy of God's wisdom and generosity to accept, and to crown with the bestowal of a consciousness of acceptance; since true development in the life of divine love and communion must proceed on the basis of a filial and not of a servile consciousness.

It may be admitted that, if Paul had had less occasion to clarify the condition of entering into the life of justification, and had been able to devote more specific attention to growth in that life, he might have given somewhat greater prominence to the secondary conditions of salvation, namely, repentance and evangelical obedience. But, on the other hand, it must be granted that these secondary conditions can be healthfully fulfilled only as the great Pauline principle of faith is dominant. Divorced from that principle they lead inevitably to a round of ascetic and Pharisaic observances, a legality incompatible with largeness and depth of spiritual life. Doubtless the doctrine of justification by faith needs to be guarded against being made a cover for a light estimate of practical activity. But in its proper character, as has been well said, "It is the charter of Christian liberty for all time; of emancipation from legalism with its treadmill service, and fear and gloom and uncertainty; from laborious self-salvation, whether by religious ceremonial or by orthodox opinions, or by the magic power of sacraments." [1]

As has been stated, adoption belongs with justification in the objective phase of salvation. It has indeed an intimate association with regeneration, since being born of the Spirit is

[1] Bruce, St. Paul's Conception of Christianity, p. 148.

the needful interior ground of spiritual sonship.[1] But sonship may be regarded as denoting a new relation as well as a new character, and the former aspect is expressed by adoption. The term is significant of an inseparable accompaniment of justification. Perhaps it would be better to say that it describes justification itself from a particular point of view. Nothing but sin alienates from the true filial relation with God. It follows, then, that when sin is pardoned there is immediate instatement in that relation, and that the awakening of the filial consciousness becomes at once appropriate. Paul was but illustrating the intrinsic connections of the subject, when his discourse on justification ran into a fervid inculcation of the idea of adoption, or sonship, and its inward attestation.[2]

It is no doubt a biblical conception that men universally are in a sense children of God. This conception is implicit in the thought of the divine fatherhood which encompasses, like a warm and radiant firmament, the discourses of Jesus. A passing reference to the same is contained in Paul's address on Mars' hill.[3] Adoption, therefore, is not significant of a transition from mere creaturehood to sonship. It signifies rather a transition from a standing, in which the high privileges of sonship are put in abeyance by interruption of communion with God, to a standing in which they are appropriately made available for actual enjoyment. It is God's recognition of the privilege of one, who is no longer an alien in spirit, to be treated as a son.

An element in the practical value of the doctrine of sonship toward God is the basis which it supplies for a high conception of human brotherhood. This was not overlooked by the New Testament writers. John argued that he who is begotten of the God of love must love his brother.[4] And Paul conceived that all artificial distinctions and barriers between men dis-

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[1] John i. 12, 13.
[2] Rom. viii. 1–17; Gal. iii. 26–29, iv. 1–7.
[3] Acts xvii. 28, 29.
[4] 1 John iv. 7–12.

appear before the common and lofty privilege of sonship. "Ye are all sons of God through faith in Jesus Christ. . . . There can be neither Jew nor Greek, there can be neither bond or free, there can be no male and female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus."[1]

That the children of God are heirs of an incorruptible inheritance is everywhere assumed in the New Testament. The reason of the case admits of nothing less. Heirship must go with sonship, and heirship to something commensurate with the divine riches. The description of the inheritance, though compassed in brief lines by the sacred writers, leaves nothing out which hope or aspiration could wish to have included.[2] Next to the character and the atoning work of Christ, there is nothing so well adapted as this description to mirror the meanness and frivolity of sin.

IV.—Salvation in its Subjective Aspect, or Awakening, Regeneration, and Sanctification.

The contrast which is drawn in the Scriptures between the love of God and the sinfulness of men implies that God's seeking must precede that of men, or that the primary impulse to spiritual renovation must come from Him. Man is indeed expected to ask, to seek, and to knock at the door; but logically prior to all this is the divine knocking at the door of man's heart, and the coming of the divine messenger to seek and to save the lost.[3] The impulse to turn toward communion with God depends on the impact of divine agency upon the human spirit. This initial agency may be described by the term awakening, which thus denotes a pressure from the divine

[1] Gal. iii. 26, 28.

[2] Matt. xxv. 34; Luke x. 20; Rom. viii. 17, 21; Gal. iv. 7; 1 Pet. i. 3–5; 1 John iii. 2; Rev. xxi. 7.

[3] Rev. iii. 20; Luke xix. 10.

side which is unsought by men, but whose intent they can either follow out or resist.

Awakening is not so much regeneration as a preparation for the same. It is true that some theologians, especially of the strict Calvinistic school, have preferred to understand by regeneration the primary act of God in man's spiritual recovery, in which almighty power operates upon a purely passive subject, and creates therein a new spiritual sensibility. But this view, as will be shown a little further on, is not in harmony with the scriptural representation, which assumes a conditioning agency in man, or a consenting rather than a purely passive subject of regeneration. The office of awakening is to produce the sense of need and the measure of aspiration and desire which are requisite to make one a willing subject in the consummation of his spiritual sonship.

Regeneration is so thoroughly a biblical idea that even in the Old Testament it comes well-nigh to a full-orbed expression. The great prophets of Israel, sorrowing over the practical apostasy of the nation, and convinced that nothing but a fundamental change of disposition could induce a true keeping of the covenant, were saved from despair by their faith in the power of God's Spirit to work this great change. Penetrating to the inmost that is in man, the Divine Spirit, as they conceived, is able to form a new heart and a new spirit, a temper reverent, tender, and obedient, in place of former hardness and perversity.[1]

In the New Testament the doctrine of regeneration is presented in a variety of forms. The Synoptical Gospels, while they do not treat of it formally, inculcate it very emphatically by insisting that a right heart is the necessary antecedent of right conduct, that the tree must be made good before the fruit can be good, and that all who would enter the kingdom

[1] Ezek. xi. 19, xviii. 31, xxxvi. 25–27, xxxvii. 23, 24; Jer. iv. 4, ix. 23–26; Isa. i. 18–20; Ps. li. 10, 11; Deut. xxx. 6.

of heaven must be converted and become as little children.[1] In John's writings, terms are used which are in close affinity with the etymological sense of regeneration. The subject of spiritual renovation is said to be born from above, to be born of the Spirit, to be born or begotten of God.[2] The first of these phrases is also rendered "born anew"; but so far as a warrant for the term regeneration is concerned, it is not, of course, at all necessary to insist upon this rendering, since a spiritual birth, represented as subsequent to natural birth, is, in idea, a re-birth. Paul has various figures for expressing the thought of regeneration, all of them indicative of his lively conviction of the profound change effected when one passes from the life of sinful license, or mere legal striving, into a true appropriation of the grace of God in Christ. He is free to describe the change as a dying to sin and a rising in newness of life;[3] as a new creation;[4] as a putting off the old man and a putting on of the new man.[5] In language quite diverse from these symbolical phrases, but no less expressive of profound transformation, Paul teaches also that the implanting of love must be regarded as central to the work of renewing and glorifying the nature of man; at least, he teaches this by implication, inasmuch as he represents love to be the preëminent gift of the Holy Spirit, the crown of the virtues, the possession which has unfading significance and value.[6]

It accords with the character of the Bible, as a book of practical edification, that it should in general describe regeneration by figurative terms which are striking to the imagination, and thus far more impressive than any abstract terms could

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[1] Matt. xv. 18–20, vii. 17, 18, vi. 22–24, xviii. 3; Mark vii. 20–23, x. 15, 16 Luke xviii. 17.

[2] John iii. 3–8, i. 12; 1 John iii. 9, iv. 7, v. 1, 4.

[3] Rom. vi. 2–6, 11, 14, vii. 5, 6, viii. 2, 10; Gal. ii. 20; Col. ii. 13.

[4] Gal. vi. 15; 2 Cor. v. 17; Eph. ii. 10.

[5] Eph. iv. 22–24; Col. iii. 10.

[6] 1 Cor. xii. 31 to xiii.

be. Moreover, the subject is so hidden that literal description may be regarded as impossible. If we attempt to translate the biblical figures into more exact terms, we encounter a double danger: on the one hand, the danger of making so much of regeneration as to compromise the continuous identity of its subject; on the other, the danger of making too little of it to do credit to the energy of the supernatural power with which it is scripturally and rationally associated. It is an exaggeration to suppose that it imports any new faculty into a man; it falls short of the truth to represent that it is significant only of a new activity or direction of some one faculty. Doubtless the greater stress falls upon the new direction which regeneration gives to the will, but its effect must be regarded as reaching to other factors of man's being. Following the order of emphasis we may say, in the will regeneration initiates or consummates a supreme choice of God and His kingdom of righteousness; in the sensibilities it enlivens the nobler order of feelings; in the intellect it supplies at least the data of a new inward experience, and thus, in some measure, clarifies and enlarges the perception of spiritual things, though by no means forestalling the opportunity and demand for a progressive increase of spiritual knowledge.

The deep-reaching and supernatural character of regeneration does not necessarily imply that it always makes within the sphere of consciousness a specially distinct and marked crisis. The intensity of the apprehension of change depends naturally upon the amount of resistance to be overcome. One who has nurtured intemperate impulses, which urge with great momentum toward the life of earthliness and sin, is not likely to have the current of his life reversed without a vivid sense of inward revolution. On the other hand, one who has felt from early childhood the attraction of heavenly things may yield as quietly to the divine solicitation as the flower opens itself to the sunlight, and thus be conscious of no sharp division between two stages in his life. Great as is the seeming con-

trast between the supposed cases, it is purely circumstantial. Christian character in the second instance is as remote from the plane of mere nature, and rests as truly on the ground of spiritual re-birth, as in the first instance.

While regeneration is God's act of renewing man, it is also man's act of turning unto God; at least, this turning is inseparably associated with the divine act of renewal. Considered from this point of view the transformation is fitly termed conversion. Man's agency may be very small as compared with that of God. But, although man is a humble agent, it must still be contended that he is an agent, and not a mere thing. Even in the matter of regeneration God respects his agency, and makes it a part of His plan to introduce him into spiritual sonship only on condition of an initial turning or attitude of consent on his part. This is sufficiently indicated by those scriptural sentences which speak of grieving or resisting the Holy Spirit,[1] and especially by those which assume that this resistance may be carried to an intensity of antagonism which is destructive of further spiritual opportunity.[2] To assume the possibility of such a resistance is inconsistent with the notion of complete passivity in relation to regeneration. If a man can so far resist the Spirit, and does not, he wills in effect not to resist, or to let God's will be accomplished. As John presents the subject, it is the one who accepts the overtures of sonship that becomes a child of God. "As many as received Him, to them gave He the right to become the children of God, even to them that believed on His name."[3]

An impartial survey of all the facts that can be gathered favors the conclusion that in regeneration there is a union of persuasion and power. The former element is recognized in those verses of Scripture which speak of the instrumentality of truth in the work of spiritual renovation.[4] In not a few in-

[1] Acts vii. 51; Eph. iv. 30.
[2] Matt. xii. 32; Mark iii. 29; Luke xii. 10; 1 John v. 16.
[3] John i. 12. [4] John xvii. 17; James i. 18; 1 Pet i. 23; 2 Pet. i. 4.

stances it has been assumed that these verses are fundamentally descriptive of the method of regeneration, or that the Spirit works therein solely by the instrumentality of truth. But this seems to us to be putting that part of a subject which is open to construction for the whole. It is more in harmony with the sum total of scriptural data to admit a background of mystery in the moral renewal of a man, a form of immediate divine working which is beyond the scope of our analysis and description. The words of Christ to Nicodemus, as well as some of the strong expressions of the apostolic writers, invite to this admission. The scriptural and rational view of the divine immanence also suggests that God may come nearer to souls in their moral life than is implied in the use simply of mental images or representations — the only form in which truth can be conceived to operate. There is likewise a difficulty in the way of making truth the sole instrumentality in regeneration, inasmuch as a good measure of spiritual sensibility seems to be a prerequisite to deep effect by spiritual teaching. Providential discipline may indeed serve as an ally of truth, and greatly add to its efficiency in a given case; but there is abundant room for still another factor in the great task of reversing the current of a soul that is being swept on by sinful tendencies. On the other hand, however, it has to be granted that an inferior range of truth seems to afford a limited opportunity for the working of the Holy Spirit, since otherwise the ground would be wanting for the New Testament assumption that the revelation of truth in Christ prepares the way for the special ministry of the Spirit. To meet all the requirements of the subject, we are led to the theory of which a well-guarded statement has been given in the following words of a New England theologian: "In regenerating men, God in some respects acts directly and immediately on the soul, and in some respects He acts in connection with and by means of the truth. He does not regenerate them by the truth alone, and He does not regenerate them without the truth. His mediate and His

immediate influences cannot be distinguished by consciousness, nor can their respective spheres be accurately determined by reason."[1]

It has been concluded that regeneration so affects the will, the affections, and the intelligence, as to establish in its subject a preponderant tendency toward God and His kingdom of righteousness. But a right tendency is not necessarily one of perfect and indefectible strength. The complex life of the human soul makes it possible that the heavenly attraction should prevail over it, while yet it feels the drawing of the things of sense, and is in more or less danger of conceding too much to that inferior drawing. Thus, as a rule, the reborn man needs training and perfecting. From the good beginning that has been made in regeneration he needs to advance to the goal of complete sanctification.

To define accurately the scope of entire sanctification is not altogether easy. Evidently the term cannot exclude every limitation induced by sin, else it will be made the name of an impossible experience, since no recovered sinner is likely ever to reach quite the same spiritual stature which he would have gained through perfect obedience to God. On the other hand, it evidently falls short of the natural significance of the term to make it cover a less domain than comes under the category of responsible character. All abnormal proclivities in the emotive nature, which have been caused by personal misconduct, have a cast of sinfulness as being blameworthy tendencies to sin. Evidently entire sanctification should extend to the cure of personal sinfulness, and so must correct these tendencies. This is the least that can be claimed; and it seems not inappropriate to include under the term the healing of all tendencies to evil that inhere in the soul and are not due simply to the pressure of an unfriendly environment.

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[1] Daniel Fiske in Bibliotheca Sacra, July, 1865.

Theoretically it is doubtless conceivable that in regeneration all abnormal tendencies that partake of a moral character should be eliminated, so that further solicitations to sin would be limited to external sources. But the common experience of men teaches that, if there is such an event as regeneration, it prepares in general for an earnest and measurably victorious struggle with wrong tendencies rather than effects their complete extinction. Sin is indeed contrary to the relation into which one is brought by spiritual re-birth. It is alien to the filial character and standing. John even describes it as an impossible event,[1] and Paul speaks of it as something to which the believer is to reckon himself entirely dead.[2] The meaning is not that there is no liability to sin remaining, but that sin is radically contrary to the character and relation of the reborn man. In statements like these the New Testament magnifies the office of regeneration. But alongside of them we may place a great body of instructions and exhortations which imply that those who have believed to the saving of their souls need to watch with all diligence against falling, and to press on to further strength and sanctification.[3]

The principal means which must be employed on the side of the individual in carrying forward his sanctification have already been noted in what was said of the human conditions of appropriating salvation. The fundamental means is faith, viewed especially as self-surrendering trust, a disposition or bearing that is born at once of God's Spirit and man's spirit, and which represents the union of grace and freedom. Secondary means are repentance and evangelical obedience.

It is quite customary to associate repentance rather with the preliminaries of positive Christian experience than to give it a place among the conditions of progressive sanctification. But it undoubtedly belongs among these conditions. There is indeed a much larger scope for repentance after regeneration than before. It is a distinguishing characteristic of the

[1] 1 John iii. 9. [2] Rom. vi. 2. [3] Heb. xii. 1–17 is a notable specimen.

regenerate person that he has within a ground of decisive reaction against sin. He may yield to temptation, but he can have no continued complacency in any forbidden indulgence. His deeply rooted conviction of the necessity of God's favor and of the sanctity of the relation held to Him rebukes his trespass and puts him to shame. Next to the vitality of spirit which keeps out the trespass altogether is that which leads to instant and thorough repentance of the same.

Now, no one is in the way of sanctification who does not preserve intact this ground of reaction against sin. No one can press toward the goal who does not take care of his repentance. And by taking care of repentance is not meant any scheme of external procedure with its liability to end in a mere shallow legality. The undertaking of a certain quantum of self-chosen inflictions, or the submission to certain kinds of ecclesiastical penances, may be little else than evading an obligation by making payment in bogus coin. Genuine repentance, to whatever outward amend it may inspire, is essentially an amend within the spirit itself. It springs from spiritual sensibility, from the frank recognition of personal ill-desert, from courageous and unflinching observation of the cleft between the actual and the ideal in conduct and character. The first of these cannot be directly commanded; but the frank recognition of ill-desert and the intent gaze upon the stainless ideal which is set before us in Jesus Christ come very largely within the sphere of personal choice and endeavor. He who fulfills the part of duty and spiritual wisdom in relation to them may hope that the Divine Spirit will so fulfill His part that the ground of reaction against sin, implanted in regeneration, shall not only be kept intact but be strengthened and intensified.

As respects evangelical obedience, it is worthy of notice that a thoroughly healthful result depends upon a union of the subjective with the more objective phases. There are gospel precepts which relate to interior acts, such as prayer,

worship, spiritual contemplation and watchful care over motives and dispositions. It will not do to neglect this order of precepts. The activity which slights them is likely to lack steadfastness, and is quite certain to be wanting in depth of spiritual animus. On the other hand, there are precepts which concern one's relation to the kingdom of righteousness, or to the aggregate of men viewed as possible citizens of that kingdom. To slight these is to shut out the spiritual faculties from the great field of appropriate exercise. Growth in holiness is growth in unselfishness. Sacrifice for men helps to beget interest in men. Thus the heart is enlarged in its sympathies, and thought for others is on the way to becoming spontaneous and habitual. Neither engrossment in the demands of self-salvation nor mere bustling activity makes the path of true spiritual advancement. That path is found rather in the constant union of the interior with the exterior, of the exercises of piety toward God with those of self-expenditure toward men. As in the thought of Jesus, so in that of His disciple, the relation with God is to be treated as inseparable from the relation with the spiritual commonwealth.

It seems to be an obvious truth that progress in sanctification means progress in the sense of direct personal relationship to the Lord and Redeemer of men, and that anything which dims this sense is an obstacle to that progress. Yet history shows that the truth in question has been far from claiming constant recognition. Instead of seeking salvation in companionship with a Divine Person, men have been made to depend upon ecclesiastical mechanism. The impersonal expression "grace" has taken the place of the personal expression "Christ," or has been used apart from the thoroughly personal association in which it ought to stand. A reservoir of grace to which priestly custodians have the more direct access, and which may be made to yield supplies by various expedients, has been with multitudes the dominant conception. This is the obstacle which overgrown sacerdotalism and ritual-

ism put in the way of a vivid apprehension of direct personal relationship with the supreme object of faith. Evangelical religion casts aside this obstacle; but its votaries need to be on guard against interposing one of their own. It is possible to fall out of the plane of reality by occupying the thought too much with abstract conceptions. Theology very properly analyzes the process of man's spiritual recovery and points out the different factors which have place therein. But the problem of personal sanctification cannot be successfully wrought out by dwelling at length upon these factors. It is not a problem in a kind of spiritual alchemy, in which success is to be sought by an exact and skillful juxtaposition of ingredients, so much faith, consecration, and repentance being apportioned to one stage, and so much to another. Personal sanctification comes in and through personal communion with the ultimate objects of faith, love, and devotion. He who, in his measure, keeps the image of the Heavenly Father before his mind as it was before the mind of Christ, or the image of Christ before his mind as it was before the minds of Paul and John, and who thus brings the Personal Divine into his daily thought and activity, and lives and breathes in the atmosphere of divine love and righteousness, needs no subtle advice on the subject of sanctification; he is giving the Holy Spirit His coveted opportunity to make increasingly real and glorious to his apprehension the verities of the divine kingdom; he is travelling in the open way to the goal. Proceeding onward earnestly and obediently in that path, he will surely find the sky overhead brightening, some day, with an unknown radiance.

This is as much as saying that progressive sanctification is the same as progress in spiritual sonship, and that its conditions are essentially the same as the conditions of entrance into that sonship. In fact one is doing the best for his sanctification that is ever done, or can be done, when he continues with full earnestness and unswerving fidelity in the spiritual

activities which entitled him, under the economy of grace, to be enrolled among God's regenerate children.

As the first decisive stage of sanctification is identical with regeneration, or the initiation of sonship, so complete sanctification signifies *perfected sonship* — the state of one so truly a child of God as to have naught of the unfilial remaining in himself. The goal of sanctification may also be fitly described by the terms which express the moral nature of God, namely, *holy love*. An equivalent description is *conformity to Christ*. In Johannine phrase it is sketched as the *perfect love which casts out fear*.

Can this goal be reached in the present life? In other words, can a man advance here to a state which may be described negatively as free from sin, and positively as under the complete dominion of love — a state in which the moral disposition is pure and normal through and through, and conduct fails to be ideal in all respects only through unavoidable creaturely limitations? It must be granted that observation teaches us that the period of earthly discipline is in general all too short to consummate in this sense the work of sanctification. But, on the other hand, where is the warrant for assuming that such a consummation is strictly impossible? Philosophy certainly does not afford it, that is, a philosophy that is consonant with Christian principles. It cannot be said that the body is an insuperable obstacle to entire sanctification, for Christian truth does not allow that there is any essential evil in matter. If there is, then, any insuperable obstacle, it must be in the spirit. The human spirit is indeed finite, fallible, and infirm; but not one of these qualites stands in necessary opposition to holiness. As for the sinful bias with which it is affected, who can say on grounds of reason that it is beyond remedy within the limits of earthly life? Great moral transformations are wrought in very brief intervals of time. Who then is authorized to affirm that it is beyond the competency of

God's remedial agency to completely sanctify a soul before death?

A rational warrant for denying the possibility of entire sanctification in this life being thus wanting, the ground of denial must be found, if discovered at all, in revelation. It must be proved that the Scriptures teach that it is outside of the divine ability or the divine purpose to consummate the sanctification of any subject of grace before the article of death. Calvinists are hindered of course by their postulates from assuming that it is beyond the divine ability to do this; and non-Calvinists must needs despair of sustaining this assumption from the Scriptures, in the face of such words as those of Paul, which describe God as "able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think."[1] It remains then to deduce from the Scriptures that it is outside of the divine purpose, or no part of the divine economy, to bring any one to the point of entire sanctification in this life. But who has ever made a deduction of this sort which has even the appearance of legitimacy? Various passages show indeed that every man has unmistakable occasion to include himself in the ranks of sinners when his life is taken as a whole. Not one of these, however, gives the faintest indication that its author meant to teach that in no case can sin be entirely put away before the separation of soul and body. Take, for example, this declaration of John, "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us."[2] What an eccentricity of exegesis to suppose that this teaches a necessary continuance in sin, when the next verse reads, "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness"; and when further on it is said, "Whosoever is begotten of God doeth no sin, because his seed abideth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is begotten of God."[3] Evidently what John meant to affirm in the first of these

[1] Eph. iii. 20. [2] 1 John i. 8. [3] 1 John iii. 9.

verses was simply the fact that the man who denies in general his need of God's pardoning grace is guilty of untruth, and not that the grace of God is certain to leave in him some remains of sin so long as he is in the body. Again, take the clause in the Lord's prayer which asks for the forgiveness of trespasses. This prayer, it is said, was designed for universal use, and therefore every man upon earth must, in point of character or conduct, or both, be in constant need of forgiveness. Some advocates of the possibility of entire sanctification have answered this objection by urging that, although a man may be completely healed of sin, so far as moral contamination is concerned, he still bears its effects in infirmities, or in lack of the spiritual and intellectual stature which continuous exercise in holiness would have given, and so has need to beseech forgiveness. But this is a very doubtful line of argument. Carried out rigorously it would involve the conclusion that the prayer for forgiveness will need to be repeated by every redeemed being to all eternity. So far as mere infirmities are concerned, such as liability to mistaken judgments, they never need to be forgiven, except so far as they have been induced by personal transgression; and, as a matter of fact, when the transgression is forgiven they are no longer imputed. To say that such things need in themselves to be atoned for or forgiven is as much as to say that a man needs to apologize before God for the very creaturehood which God Himself has instituted in him. For aught we know, the glorified saints in heaven will make blunders; indeed, the essential limitations of creaturehood make it entirely probable that they will. No such resort as the plea under consideration is in the slightest degree necessary. While the Lord's prayer is eminently appropriate to the state of men in general, no one can demonstrate that every clause in it was designed absolutely to fit every possible condition of every man in the world. Moreover, the fact of entire sanctification would not exclude the proper use of the prayer, unless that fact was indubitably certified to the consciousness

of the sanctified person. Once more, the Lord's prayer is, in form, a joint petition, and as such in every conceivable earthly relation can fitly be used, since it is intercession for others as well as supplication for personal needs. Other scriptural passages which are quoted on the side of denial need no detailed consideration. They are nothing more than general, and for the most part rhetorical, expressions of the unchallenged fact of the great proneness of men to sin.[1]

On the other hand, the possibility of entire sanctification or perfect love is indicated by numerous passages: (1) by commands or exhortations in which all that it can properly be regarded as including is laid upon men as a matter of obligation;[2] (2) by descriptions of Christian privilege or duty;[3] (3) by prayers for Christian attainments.[4] One or two qualifying views, it is true, may be brought into conjunction with this aggregate of evidence. It has to be granted that the ultimate and unblemished ideal would probably have been held up to men, and progress toward it urged upon them, even though it were known to the mind of God that the rate of progress anywhere attainable in the world could not bring any one fully up to the ideal. To place the standard lower than the height to which man's best intuition of moral obligation can rise would be to present something less than the most effective spur to righteous endeavor. The publication of the perfect standard is justifiable, whether immediate attainment thereto is possible or not, since striving toward the standard is immediately and always obligatory until it is reached. It has also to be granted that the Scriptures do not explicitly ascribe entire sanctification to any individual. Such terms as "perfect," "righteous," and "holy," in their application to the

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[1] 1 Kings viii. 46; Eccl. vii. 20; James iii. 2.

[2] Matt. v. 48, xxii. 37; Mark xii. 30; Luke x. 27; 2 Cor. vii. 1; 1 Pet. i. 15, 16.

[3] Rom. vi. 6, 22; 1 Thess. iii. 13; Eph. iv. 13; 2 Pet. i. 4; 1 John i. 7, 9, ii. 5, iii. 3, iv. 18.

[4] Matt. vi. 10; Eph. iii. 14–21; 1 Thess. v. 23; Heb. xiii. 20, 21.

men of the Bible may be supposed to be employed in a relative sense, and to denote nothing more than eminent piety or a high degree of spiritual advancement. Paul's representation of his own experience, in Gal. ii. 20, is perhaps the nearest approach to a claim for the complete sanctification of a particular individual that is to be found in the Bible; but there is small reason to suppose that Paul had any idea that he was making a claim for so high and precise an attainment as is denoted by the current theological phrase. It is but fair to place these qualifying views alongside the scriptural evidence for entire sanctification. Nevertheless, it must be held that the force of that evidence is not fully cancelled by them. The New Testament gives no ground for supposing that there is such an absolute contrast between the conditions of the heavenly life and those of Christian life in this world that sin must be entirely alien to the one and inevitable in the other. In the absence of such a contrast, the commands, instructions, and prayers which look to entire sanctification or perfect love carry a certain presumption that the state which these terms define is of possible attainment in this life. It must be confessed, however, that it stands forth as an exceedingly high ideal. Any one who understands all that it implies will despair of its possibility, save as his heart is quickened by a large and intense faith in the marvellous power of divine grace.

V. — The Relation between the Objective and the Subjective Aspect.

What has been said may serve to show that the distinction between the objective and the subjective phase of salvation is not only well founded in the nature of the case, but has also the implicit sanction of the Scriptures. It would be a great mistake, however, to push this distinction into anything like a disjunction. As in the general provision of salvation we saw

the objective and subjective united in perfect harmony, the economy of grace being so shaped as at once to pay tribute to divine righteousness and to influence men most effectively, so also in the individual application or appropriation of salvation we find the objective and the subjective intrinsically connected. The conditions of the one are the same as those of the other. The faith which brings justification opens the heart to the ministry of the regenerating Spirit, so that where objectively there is the standing of sonship there is subjectively more or less of the disposition of sonship. The same trustful and obedient life which is necessary to perfect the standing of sonship, or to bring men up from the plane of accepted sons to that of well-beloved sons, where they are fully the objects of the divine complacency, is likewise necessary to consummate the work of progressive sanctification. Thus the objective and the subjective, though distinguishable enough in thought, are inseparable in fact. So they were evidently viewed by the scriptural writers. As has already been observed, when Paul thought of a man's being justified by faith he thought of one who by the same faith came into newness of life, and was made partaker of the Spirit which sheds abroad the love of God within the heart. And John was so far from conceiving a possible disjunction between the standing of sonship before God and a sanctified life that he declares: "Whosoever sinneth hath not seen Him, neither known Him."[1] The antinomian theory is as unscriptural as it is unethical.

VI. — The Consciousness or Assurance of Salvation.

The intrinsic connection between the subjective and the objective phase of salvation involves the conclusion that personal appropriation is a matter of consciousness. There may be in-

[1] 1 John iii. 6.

deed no consciousness of a decisive spiritual crisis, as there may be in fact no such crisis. Nevertheless, since it is in God's plan to regenerate the one whom He justifies, in other words, to make him a partaker of the character of a son when he introduces him into the filial standing, the one who is actually saved has in the normal course of things a consciousness of salvation, a sense of spiritual affinity with God corresponding to his condition as a subject of spiritual rebirth. Various disturbing causes may affect this consciousness, so that it shall have very different degrees of clearness at different times; but, so certainly as it is the vocation of the regenerated person to act as a son of God, it is only the normal fulfillment of his privilege to feel as a son, or to know that his heart goes out to God as to a reconciled Father. Reconciliation on its subjective side means the overcoming of the alien spirit in man. In proportion, therefore, as God seeks to reconcile men to Himself, He must seek in consistency to awaken in them the spirit of filial trust and confidence; it must be a leading aim with Him to bring them into a fellowship of indubitable mutual love. Assurance, in the sense of an inward conviction or subjective certainty of being graciously accepted of God and embraced in His love, is part and parcel of the New Testament conception of vital religion. To take it out would be to mutilate the fundamental notion of sonship, or rather to replace it with the counterfeit representation of a servile relation to God.

Assurance may not be so of the essence of justifying faith that the absence of the one is proof positive of the lack of the other. Room must be allowed for eccentricities in feeling as well as in thinking. An abnormal direction of the latter may give more or less of wrong bias to the former. Physical states may also tend to deflect the emotional experience from its proper plane. But to deny that the normal Christian consciousness contains the element of assurance, as defined above, is to go in the face of the most explicit teachings of the New Testa-

ment. The ultra-sacerdotal notion that God keeps His children off at arm's length, and leaves them for the most part to a human confidence in the validity of sacramental performances, which confidence, in the nature of the case, is something less than indubitable, finds no echo in the apostolic teaching. "Because ye are sons," says Paul, "God sent forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, crying, Abba, Father."[1] "Ye received not the spirit of bondage again unto fear; but ye received the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit Himself beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God."[2] "In whom having believed, ye were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, which is an earnest of our inheritance unto the redemption of God's own possession."[3] "On whom," says Peter, "though now ye see Him not, yet believing, ye rejoice greatly with joy unspeakable and full of glory: receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls."[4] Equally suggestive of a positive realization of divine relationships are the words of Christ spoken in connection with His promise of the Comforter: "He that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself unto him. . . . If a man love me he will keep my word; and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him."[5]

Some of the words just cited imply that at the basis of assurance there is a witnessing both of the Divine Spirit and man's spirit. As much might also be concluded from the approved maxim of Christian philosophy respecting the union of the divine and the human generally in spiritual processes. The questions open to discussion concern the province of each factor and the relation of the one to the other.

According to John Wesley's interpretation, the witness of the Holy Spirit is immediate, — a conviction, wrought in some

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[1] Gal. iv. 6.
[2] Rom. viii. 16, 17
[3] Eph. i. 13, 14.
[4] 1 Pet. i. 8, 9.
[5] John xiv. 21, 23.

inexplicable way, of the specific fact of acceptance with God. The witness of the human spirit, on the other hand, is the inward conviction or judgment that one possesses the fruits of the Spirit. "It is nearly, if not exactly, the same with the testimony of a good conscience towards God; and is the result of reason or reflection on what we feel in our own souls. Strictly speaking, it is a conclusion drawn partly from the Word of God and partly from our own experience."[1] In the logical order, Wesley contends, the witness of the Holy Spirit stands first, since a knowledge of the love of God to us personally is a condition of that love in us which must characterize all holy emotions and acts.

That there is truth in this analysis will not be disputed; but a doubt may legitimately arise about its containing the whole truth. As respects the witness of the human spirit, Wesley seems to credit too much to a reflective process, and too little to the spontaneous conviction which issues, without any consciousness of argumentative procedure, from living spiritual affections. A man's judgment, on reviewing himself, that he has the fruits of the Spirit, is indeed a witness of his own spirit that he is a child of God. But there is a swifter and intenser witness than this. The mother whose heart is actually bound up in her child does not need, in order to convince herself that she has parental love, to reflect upon an approved catalogue of the fruits of parental love. The outgoing of her heart to her offspring is an immediate experience of parental love, an original knowledge which reflection may ratify, but to whose vivacity and certainty it can add little or

[1] Serm. X., XI. We give the view of Wesley expressed in these sermons as being most representative of his way of thinking. It may be noticed, however, that he has made a passing reference to a conception of the method of assurance which is emphasized in our exposition of the subject. In his "Christian Perfection" (p. 119), he wrote as follows: —

Q. But does not sanctification shine by its own light?

A. And does not the new birth too? Sometimes it does; and so does sanctification; at others it does not.

nothing. So spiritual motions and affections in the heart, — the feeling of trust, the blended reverence and confidence, the joyful complacency which accompanies the thought of God, the thirst for divine fellowship, and the sense of that fellowship, — irradiate one's relation to God before time is taken for any formal induction.

The giving of due credit to this spontaneous element in the witnessing of man's spirit is the more important as it helps us to construe the mode of the Holy Spirit in His contribution to assurance. Wesley's description of the Holy Spirit's agency, as consisting in the immediate production of a specific conviction, applies far better to a possible crisis or exceptional exigency in Christian experience than to assurance as a standing fact in a normal Christian life. It has become well-nigh a commonplace in theological thinking that in inspiration the Holy Spirit acts dynamically, carrying up the human powers to a higher plane of action instead of discarding or repressing them. But if this is the method of producing conviction or insight respecting the truths of the divine kingdom, analogy favors the conclusion that it is also the method of producing conviction as to the personal standing of a believer before God. All that is needed for assurance ordinarily is the existence of vital spiritual affections. These shine with their own light. A truly filial disposition, by virtue of its nature, invokes God as Father. In stimulating, therefore, to love and trust, the Holy Spirit contributes to assurance. By forming the character of a son, He puts the cry of a son into the heart. The argument that a knowledge of God's love to the individual is the needed ground of his love to God must be taken with a qualification. A positive doubt of God's love would indeed be a serious obstacle to loving Him. But a safeguard against such doubt is provided in the objective revelation through Christ, which solicits to self-surrendering faith. Any one who is on the verge of exercising that faith is already on the verge of a vital apprehension

of God's love to himself. Indeed, self-surrendering faith implies a measure of confidence in God's love; and an upspringing love toward God naturally evokes in its subject a spontaneous inference as to God's love to himself. For the Holy Spirit, then, to enkindle love, especially in one who is confronted by the objective revelation of God's love in Christ, is to work effectively toward an inward persuasion of the love of God. It is to be noticed also that one cannot make much progress in the spiritual life before the provocative to love is found quite as much in the contemplation of God's infinite loveliness — the unspeakable beauty and excellence of the holy love which constitutes his nature — as in the mere thought of gracious acceptance with Him.

While then we do not deny that, in accommodation to some special demand of the religious experience, the Holy Spirit may operate immediately for producing the conviction of acceptance with God, we are persuaded that assurance as a standing fact in the normal Christian life rests principally on the mediate agency of the Spirit—on His efficiency in forming the filial character and feeling. To sum up all in a sentence, assurance is in and through the filial consciousness, which consciousness is at once an activity of man's spirit and a product of the Holy Spirit's agency.

A conviction of sonship toward God, however luminous it may be, does not of course involve complete self-knowledge. Since consciousness is not fully commensurate with being in man, the testimony of consciousness cannot render a perfectly complete account of a man's spiritual condition. It may assure him that he is a child of God, but not that he is a perfected child. Only by revelation from an omniscient source can he know that there is no remnant of sinful tendency beneath consciousness. The fact of entire sanctification can be duly certified by nothing except this special revelation. No flow of spiritual affections, though reaching to ecstasy, can be taken

as an undubitable evidence. To the known fact that the current of the religious life is strong there would need still to be added the proof that it is all-controlling, or bears on the whole moral personality.

Is it a part of the divine economy to grant this special revelation? The Scriptures have not informed us that it is. While they teach that the Holy Spirit testifies to sonship, they do not teach that He testifies to perfection in sonship. Paul indeed speaks of an inner illumination which enables us to know the things which are freely given us of God.[1] But in the connection he is not discussing the possibility of perfect self-knowledge, but simply contrasting the sight, which the spiritual man has of the great treasures prepared by God, with the blindness of the natural man. It is giving an unwarrantable exactness to his words to suppose that he had in mind a specific revelation by which a man's spiritual state is disclosed to himself down to the last item of his personality. Such a means of an infallible judgment on himself Paul has indicated that he had no thought of claiming.[2]

A scriptural warrant being thus wanting for the fact of the revelation in question, it must be approved, if at all, by the testimony of Christians. Doubtless some persons have supposed themselves to have received such a revelation; but it has to be acknowledged that the number is small compared to the total number of those who have made an impression of special saintliness in their lives; and also that very few of this small number have been persons of such carefulness and sobriety of judgment as to be above suspicion of having unconsciously inserted by interpretation an element that was not actually in their experience. We touch here, it is true, upon ground that is beyond the reach of decisive investigation. We will not dogmatize; but such means of judgment as are accessible to us incline us to think that any Christian who examines his

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[1] 1 Cor. ii. 12. [2] 1 Cor. iv. 3, 4.

case with close discrimination will not wish to testify to his religious condition in any stronger terms than the following, used by one of the most edifying expositors of Christian perfection on the anniversary of a remarkable experience: "A year ago I said that I did not know what was below the gaze of my consciousness. I still say the same, adding the testimony that the varied changes and perplexities through which I have since passed have failed to reveal any proof that Jesus is not king over the domain of my unconscious, as He is over my conscious, self."[1] This, it will be observed, is a testimony to a conscience void of offense toward God, but is not a claim to distinct assurance of entire sanctification.

It might not be easy to prove that the actual possessor of entire sanctification would be damaged by the consciousness of its possession. Yet, on the other hand, something may be conceded to the widespread conviction that the most genuine saint is wont to be unaware of his sainthood.

VII. — The Possibility of a Loss of Salvation.

One more inference remains to be drawn from the intimate relation which subsists between the objective and the subjective phase of salvation. The regenerate character, it has been observed, while not excluding the possibility of sinning, is a ground of reaction against sin, insuring prompt repentance of transgression and a filial turning unto God. Now this fact must claim the divine recognition, and therefore affect the standing that is accorded in a given instance. The sin which does not push into indifference and hardness, which, in other words, does not cancel the filial character, in like manner does not obliterate the filial standing. It needs indeed to be forgiven; but in virtue of the filial character still remaining it is

[1] Daniel Steele, Love Enthroned, p. 292.

certain to be sincerely repented of and to obtain forgiveness. The grace needed and extended is that of indulgence toward an offending and penitent son, not that of instatement in sonship. So far then as justification is significant of entrance into a new filial relation toward God, it cannot be regarded as being done away by every sin, but only by sin which passes into the character, so that virtually there is the standing purpose of sin as well as the unpremeditated act, and the ground of repentance established in regeneration is annulled or made inoperative.

As respects the possibility of a complete loss of the regenerate character, or lapse into decisive apostasy, something may doubtless be said in favor of the negative. One who has known the joy of salvation and the dignity of divine relationships is in a manner disqualified for permanent satisfaction in the life of sin with its emptiness and meanness. He is likely therefore to experience an incentive to return from his prodigality. But, on the other hand, the range of possible caprice is very great, and the infatuation of sin is of incalculable force. Prolonged consent to the downward gravitation works toward an impossibility of a return to God, since it tends to paralysis of the spiritual powers. On the whole, rational considerations may be said to weigh rather for than against the possibility of final apostasy.

The same is to be said of the scriptural evidence. Some sentences, it is true, in the parable of the good shepherd, not to dwell upon passages less capable of supporting the same inference,[1] may seem to imply an invincible safeguard against the ultimate lapse of any true disciple of Christ. But, it is an approved canon of interpretation that in parabolic teaching representations subsidiary to the main point are not to be over-

[1] Here belong Rom. viii. 38, 39, xi. 29; Phil. i. 6; 1 Pet. i. 5. Such general expressions of the persistency and fidelity with which God on His part works towards the final salvation of His children do not rule out the conditioning agency on man's part which is so generally assumed in the Scriptures.

pressed. In the parable in question the disposition of the good shepherd, or his absolute fidelity to his own, is the main point. This is enforced by strong terms. One or another of these terms, taken by itself, may be construed as meaning that no member of Christ's flock shall be allowed to perish. But that is not the truth which it is the purpose of the parable to commend. Such statements are all subsidiary to the illustration of the perfect fidelity of the shepherd, which pledges that he will guard his sheep to the utmost. They may reasonably be taken as meaning that nothing shall be allowed to wrest a disciple from the hand of Christ which divine vigilance and power can avert while duly respecting human freedom; not that personal caprice may not effect a fatal lapse. In the intense rhetorical representation a qualification is omitted which in a more prosaic rendering of the truth has to be supplied. For there are other passages in the New Testament which clearly enough indicate the possibility of falling away from the plane of discipleship and sonship. It is certainly very troublesome to draw any other inference from this language: "As touching those who were once enlightened and tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the age to come, and then fell away, it is impossible to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh and put Him to an open shame."[1] Almost as unequivocal in its intimation of the possibility of apostasy is this sentence of Paul: "I therefore so run, as not uncertainly: so fight I as not beating the air: but I buffet my body, and bring it into bondage: lest by any means, after that I have preached to others, I myself should be rejected."[2]

[1] Heb. vi. 4–6. Compare Heb. iii. 12, x. 26, 27; 2 Pet. ii. 20, 21; John xv. 6.
[2] 1 Cor. ix. 26, 27.

CHAPTER II.

CHRISTIAN LIFE IN ITS ASSOCIATED CHARACTER, OR THE CHURCH AND HER ORDINANCES.

I. — The Nature of the Christian Church.

In treating of the part which the individual has in the appropriation of salvation before taking up the subject of the Church, we have followed the logical order. As men are the presupposition of the State, so Christians are the presupposition of the Church. What the State is, or can be, is dependent upon the social and moral nature of the individual men by whose union it is constituted. Once established, the State may be a potent instrument in developing the social and moral nature, and in shaping its manifestations. That nature, however, is never its gift, but rather the basis and guarantee of its own existence. Similarly the Church has its proper ground in the Christian character of men, that character which belongs to them as partakers of spiritual sonship through union with the Lord Jesus Christ. The Church may be an effective instrumentality in nurturing this character; but it has no sovereign prerogative in its production. It may educate and persuade; it cannot choose or believe for the individual. Only through his own personal response to divine grace can he possess the regenerate character and filial consciousness; and only through the association of persons having such a character can anything better than a counterfeit Church come into existence. Practically there is interdependence; but logically the person with his prerogative of self-determination stands

first. Not until the Church has unconditional means of making men Christians in spirit and in truth can the religious personality become secondary to the organism in the order of thought. The individual may conceivably be united to Christ and alive in Him without any visible connection with the organism. The organism, on the other hand, supposing it to have a formal existence, must remain perpetually abortive without a suitable direction of the will of the individual.

This is a New Testament order of thought, being clearly reflected both in the Gospels and the Epistles. In the Gospels spiritual society is described as "the Kingdom," this term being used one hundred and twelve times, while the word "Church" is used in but two instances. In the Epistles a reverse usage prevails, "the Church" being mentioned one hundred and twelve times, and "the Kingdom" twenty-nine times. The two terms are not precisely equivalent. In the main a more concrete sense is associated with the later term than belongs with the primitive; but when an ideal significance is given to the Church, as is the case in various New Testament passages, it becomes substantially identical with the kingdom. The latter describes the new humanity, that was to arise out of obedience to the gospel call, viewed especially in relation to its Divine Head. The former has more respect to the inter-relations of the members of this new humanity as constituting a spiritual brotherhood. In connection with the use of either term — and this is the pertinent consideration — it is to be noticed that the maximum stress is laid upon the personal character and activity of those contemplated. Christ has much to say about the spirit and conduct which must distinguish his disciples, the citizens of the new kingdom. By beatitude, parable, and precept He shows abundantly how one can enter the kingdom, serve its interests, and reap its honors. But what about the institutions of the kingdom and its official administration? A few sentences sum up all of Christ's recorded words on this subject, and these give general outlines rather than exact

details. He seems to have been concerned chiefly to secure homage to spiritual maxims, to get the right spirit into the subjects of the kingdom, and to have assumed that this spirit would work itself out into suitable forms of administration. A similar ratio appears in the ministry of the apostles. An immense preponderance is given in their Epistles to the truths which directly concern personal salvation and its fruits in personal conduct. Matters of ecclesiastical régime are noticed very sparingly. Something is said of the religious disposition appropriate to different ranks of officers, but very little in formal description of their jurisdiction. As regards ceremonial, it can truthfully be affirmed that there is less of distinct prescription in the entire New Testament than in single chapters of the Old. In fact the individual stands forth as the unit of value. Far from being treated as the passive subject of an ecclesiastical mechanism, he is everywhere contemplated as a candidate for free acceptance of Christ, and for free association with those who bear His name.

It is true, nevertheless, that the New Testament attaches a high importance to the Church. As descriptive of the religion of love it could not do otherwise. Love is intrinsically a social bond, a cement of brotherhood. The ideal toward which it works by virtue of its nature is that intimate union of men in which each is at once servant of all and served by all. In this sphere of mutual service the individual grows both by what he contributes and by what he receives. While the Church has no magical power to capture the throne of his moral personality, and to institute the Christian character in him, it does furnish him most valuable aids alike for the initiation and the nurture of Christian character. As a Christian he cannot prosper in the path of self-chosen isolation. Concentration on self wars against the love which is of the essence of Christian character. Union with Christ means union with the brethren of Christ. The perfection of this union was one of the things most earnestly besought by the burdened

soul of Christ on the eve of His crucifixion; and in the apostolic instructions it is strikingly emphasized by representing Christians as parts severally of a well-compacted building, or members of one living organism, to which the idea of disjunction is thoroughly alien.[1]

If we look beyond the needs of the individual, and consider the vocation of Christianity as a world-conquering power, we cannot stop short of a very high estimate of the importance and necessity of the Church. In the great task of bringing in the practical reign of Christ joint witness for the truth and joint effort against untruth and ungodliness are manifestly indispensable.

In its ideal character the Church may be described either as the body of Christ, or as the family of God. It is the body of Christ as confessing His headship, obeying His sovereignty, receiving and being animated by the Holy Spirit in fulfillment of His promise and gracious will. It is the family of God as being composed of those who by spiritual rebirth have been made children of God and joint-heirs with Christ.

Since the ideal and the actual do not often coincide in this world, and their identity is quite out of question where an aggregate of earthly individuals is concerned, there is an obvious occasion to distinguish two aspects of the Church. Many who have been made recipients of ecclesiastical ordinances are no true subjects of Christ's headship, no part of the Church as a Christ-filled body or as the spiritual household of God. On the other hand, some who have not received ecclesiastical ordinances are in the affinities of their spirits subjects of Christ and children of God. The former, though included in the visible organism, do not belong to the Church in its ideal character; the latter, though outside of the visible organism, are included in the Church in its ideal character, and are certain to be disclosed ultimately as true members.

[1] John xvii. 20–24; Eph. ii. 19–22; 1 Pet. ii. 5; Rom. xii. 4, 5; 1 Cor. xii. 12; Eph. i. 22, 23, iv. 3–6; Col. i. 24.

It was in expression of these indubitable facts that the old Protestant distinction was asserted between the visible and the invisible Church. These terms are only a convenient means of expressing the truth that the actual and the ideal — the ecclesiastical area as it appears to the eyes of men, and the Church as it exists for God's thought — are not commensurate. Their use does not involve an assumption of two distinct churches, but only of different boundaries of the Church according as it is seen from the human or the divine point of view, under the character of an outward organism, or under that of a genuinely spiritual society, a communion of God's believing and regenerate children. Taken in this meaning, the terms find abundant justification in a common-sense view of the facts. They point, moreover, to a distinction which is by no means foreign to New Testament thought. When Christ speaks of the tares growing with the wheat till the time of harvest, and of many coming from the east and the west and sitting down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven, while the sons of the kingdom are cast out, He gives clear expression to the idea which is embodied in the contrast between the visible and the invisible Church.[1] The same contrast is also implicit in Paul's declaration that "they are not all Israel which are of Israel," [2] and likewise in John's remark, "They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us."[3]

The conception of the invisible Church directs to the notion of the unity of the Church in its higher meaning. Those who are truly united to Christ, and possessed of the spirit of adoption, have the essential bond of union and communion with each other. They may not be actually in sympathetic fellowship on account of misunderstandings. But these belong to the surface of their relations. With the advance of light, such

[1] Matt. xiii. 24–30, viii. 10–12. [2] Rom. ix. 6. [3] 1 John ii. 19.

barriers will fall away, and the deep underlying bond of a common union with Christ will assert itself. Whether this unity in spirit shall be accompanied by outward ecclesiastical unity is of subordinate concern. Ecclesiastical unity is no guarantee of true spiritual unity. Christendom may conceivably be more disunited under one ecclesiastical dominion than under a score. If it be claimed that outward divisions are more or less abnormal, it must be said on the other side that history teaches most impressive lessons about the danger of undivided power in human hands. Excess of dominion is likely to breed pride of rule and tyranny in the ecclesiastical as well as in the civil sphere. With all its divisions, Christendom is none too respectful of the rights of non-Christian nations. Ecclesiastically consolidated, it might be tempted to use such unspiritual means of religious conquest as have darkened past history. Doubtless its ecclesiastical divisions ought to be greatly reduced. But they are not to be deplored as an unmixed evil. In some part they ought to be conserved so long as any communion arrogates to itself sole ecclesiastical validity or identity with the Church of God upon earth. A general surrender to this Pharisaic pretense would rob Christianity of its greatness as a spiritual kingdom, and subject it to human measures of the more contracted sort. A claim to sole ecclesiastical legitimacy, in the face of such a record as lies back of the present, is the essence of sectarianism, and a sure token of apostasy from a spiritual conception of Christianity.

This stress upon the inner bond of unity, as opposed to the necessary inclusion of all within a common outward organism, is quite in accord with the fact that there is no authoritative prescription in the New Testament of a particular form of church government. This fact is, indeed, denied, but it rests upon adequate grounds. The apostles evidently were not intrusted with any ready-made scheme, for polity was a matter of growth under their administration, new features being sup-

plied as occasion arose. At an early date the office of deacon was instituted, at least in germ. At a later and unknown point elders were constituted a governing board in each local church. As the apostles did not receive a ready-made scheme, so they did not deliver a fixed polity to the Church. At least, no word in the New Testament can be cited in proof that they did; and post-apostolic history shows that features which are unmentioned in the New Testament, such as the episcopate proper, began to acquire currency in some quarters in the early part of the second century. Now, a progressive polity like that cannot be taken as an authoritative model. If one seizes it at a particular point and says, Up to this stage it is authoritative, he can at once be met with the inquiry, How do you know that it is not left to the practical wisdom of the Church to bring in new adjustments and modifications to meet new conditions? Apostolic discretion accommodated itself to new exigencies. Who knows that the exigencies coming properly into consideration were all met by Christian society in the Græco-Roman world within the narrow limits of the apostolic era? Nobody not favored with supernatural insight can know any such thing, and thus obtain a shadow of warrant for saying that Christians are bound for all time to find in the unfolding polity of the primitive Church at this or that point an authoritative model. Add to this the obvious truth, that no church organization on earth to-day corresponds to the apostolic pattern. So conspicuous a feature as the apostolate is nowhere reproduced. A few little adventurous sects have indeed brought out their parody; but so general has been the conviction of Christians that the apostolate was a unique provision for the foundation era of the Church, that no attempt has been made by the vast majority to conserve anything like a copy of the original college of apostles. Thus every communion which proclaims the exclusive validity of the apostolic polity assails in greater or less measure its own ecclesiastical legitimacy.

While no precise scheme of polity is enforced by apostolic precedent, it by no means follows that important lessons, valid for all time, are not furnished by the spirit and tenor of the apostolic administration. Variation in governmental appliances does not necessarily imply variation in the spirit of government or in the underlying conception of citizenship. On the proper spirit of ecclesiastical government and the nature of Christian citizenship, the apostles certainly teach lessons which ought never to be discarded. Their exceptional position makes these lessons all the more binding. If the men who were intrusted with the founding of the Church, and who delivered to it its written oracles, respected the will of the congregation, saw in special offices means of special service rather than of lordship, and addressed the whole company of believers as if they stood on essentially the same plane of Christian citizenship, then it is evident enough that the aristocratic and sacerdotal scheme, with its broad distinction between a governing rank and passive subjects, is in the line of usurpation. No followers of the apostles can possibly be entitled to an autocratic rule which they neither allowed nor exercised. Now, as a matter of fact, the apostles honored the will of the congregation, and intruded no broad chasm between the official and non-official portion of the Church. The congregation took part even in such a matter as the filling of a vacancy in the apostolic college.[1] The appointment of the original board of deacons was by the free choice of the assembly.[2] In relation to the first council of which we have record, mention is made of "the whole Church as being associated with the apostles and elders,"[3] and the decree of the council was addressed simply to the "brethren which are of the Gentiles." Liberty to participate in the worship and teaching seems to have been limited only by the gifts of individual members and the demands of good order.[4] Matters of discipline were not

[1] Acts i. 15–26. [2] Acts vi. 1–6. [3] Acts xv. 22. [4] 1 Cor. xiv, 23–33.

counted foreign to the congregation; at least, we find Paul in relation to a special case addressing the whole Corinthian church rather than a select body of officers.[1] Practices like these have all the force of precepts on the proper spirit of Christian administration. And precepts, too, are not wanting. Thus Peter instructs the elders that they are not to lord it over their charge, but make themselves ensamples to the flock.[2] The same apostle gives a phrase which may be regarded as the condensed charter of Christian liberty, when he addresses Christians generally as a "holy priesthood," ordained "to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God through Jesus Christ."[3] To make all Christians priests is equivalent to abrogating the notion of a proper sacerdotal rank, or a necessary official medium between God and the mass of worshippers. No such rank is recognized in the New Testament account of Christian society. Not a solitary instance occurs in which a Christian minister is styled a priest (ἱερεύς) in his official capacity. As Fairbairn remarks, "The studious avoidance of the name by men who were steeped in the associations of sacerdotal worship is most significant."[4]

A supplementary view needs to go with that just presented. The universal priesthood of believers, or their inherent citizenship in relation to the Christian republic, does not remove the obligation to respect and to obey constituted authority, wherever obedience is consistent with a good conscience toward God. If the apostolic model binds officials not to lord it over the flock, it binds the flock to treat respectfully those who are over them in the Lord, "and to esteem them exceeding highly in love for their work's sake."[5] To disturb brotherly harmony, and to endanger schism over mere matters of personal preference, is not so much to assert a proper right of Christian citizenship as to indulge in antichristian egoism.

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[1] 1 Cor. v.; 2 Cor. ii. 5–11. [2] 1 Pet. v. 3. [3] 1 Pet. ii. 5.
[4] The Place of Christ in Modern Theology, p. 533. [5] Thess. v. 12, 13.

II. — Criticism of the Ultra-Sacerdotal Conception of the Church.

The conception of the Church, as outlined above, collides with the monarchical theory of the Roman Catholic Church, and also with the aristocratic theory held by the Greek Church and by the High Church wing of the Anglican communion.

The Roman Catholic theory finds its culminating expression in the dogmas of papal supremacy and papal infallibility.[1] The former, as authoritatively promulgated by the Vatican Council of 1869–70, assigns to the pope the most unqualified lordship over the Church which can be conceived to be vested in a human being. Language affords no terms more expressive of absolute rule than those contained in the following canon: "If any shall say that the Roman pontiff has the office merely of inspection or direction, and not full and supreme power of jurisdiction over the universal Church, not only in things which belong to faith and morals, but also in those which relate to the discipline and government of the Church spread throughout the world; or assert that he possesses merely the principal part, and not all the fullness of this supreme power; or that this power which he enjoys is not ordinary and immediate, both over each and all the churches, and over each and all the pastors and the faithful: let him be anathema."[2]

In a brief consideration of the merits of this tremendous assumption, the emphasis falls particularly upon three points: —

1. A dogma of such vast import as that of papal supremacy ought to be a most certain and distinct part of revelation. There is nothing with which it can be compared for reach of practical significance except the existence of God and the fact of a redemptive economy. As was expressly defined by

[1] Some of the paragraphs on these themes are substantially a reproduction of matter given to print by us several years ago in a religious periodical.

[2] Fourth Session, Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, Chap. III.

Boniface VIII, in the bull *Unam Sanctam*, the dogma of papal supremacy implies that subjection to the pope is indispensable to salvation. It leads also to the conclusion that the biblical revelation has no right of direct impact upon human minds; that in truth for all, except the pope, it is no sun in the spiritual firmament, but a mere moon, having permission to shine upon the world at large only as it is reflected from the understanding of the vicegerent in the Vatican, who is alike the arbiter of faith and of conduct. Surely a dogma thus vitally related to salvation, and fundamentally determinative of the function of the biblical revelation, ought not to be ignored or left in the mist by that revelation.

2. The dogma of papal supremacy is not taught either clearly or obscurely in the Scriptures. Indeed, so far is the New Testament from assigning any peculiar prerogatives to the Bishop of Rome, that it does not even mention that official. It may be granted that Christ spoke of Peter as a foundation, and also as a bearer of the keys.[1] But when it is seen that Christ spoke in like manner of the other apostles as bearers of the keys;[2] that all the apostles are placed together in the foundation;[3] that the Book of Acts furnishes not one trace of constitutional supremacy in Peter; that the Epistles of Paul reveal him as claiming full equality in the grace of apostleship, and even assuming to correct Peter on a certain occasion,[4] what more can we reasonably make of the mention of Peter as a foundation than a simple declaration that he should take an eminent part in founding the Church? Peter was a foundation as doing the work of a founder. The other apostles were a foundation in the same sense; John in a measure scarcely inferior to that of Peter; Paul, in even a larger measure, by reason of his "more abundant labors" in the Gentile world. The special mention of Peter at a particular juncture is ade-

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[1] Matt. xvi. 18, 19.
[2] Matt. xviii. 18.
[3] Eph. ii. 20.
[4] Gal. i. 1, 11–17, ii. 6–15.

quately explained by the special occasion for rewarding him which he had just given by his noble confession. The glorious place which some of the other apostles were to have in the foundation was left to the disclosure of subsequent history. In the case of all alike, the idea of proper successors to their place in the foundation is rationally excluded. To predicate strict succession here would be like assuming a continous succession of founders of the American Republic.

If the New Testament assigns no constitutional supremacy to Peter, still further is it from bestowing that supremacy on the Bishop of Rome; for the New Testament makes not the slightest association between the apostle and the Roman bishop. The way in which Romish exegesis foists the latter into the place of the former is arbitrary to the last degree. It rivals the violence of Gnostic interpretation to make Peter figure for the Bishop of Rome on certain select occasions when words of honorable import were addressed to him. Why exclude a representative force from certain other words which have a different import? Christ said to Peter: "Get thee behind me Satan;" also, "Before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice." Is it to be concluded from these sayings that each Roman bishop must be an incarnation of Satan, and sometime between supper and breakfast must deny Christ three times? Scarcely more arbitrary is it to draw this inference than to build a papal theory on the more complimentary sentences.

3. History establishes by overwhelming evidence that papal supremacy, so far as realized in theory and fact, was attained through a long-continued accretion of assumption and power.

Newman has observed that "Christianity developed in the form, first, of a Catholic, then of a papal, Church." In thus writing he may have been a very bad Romanist, but he showed himself at this point to be a respectable historian. The papal type was truly foreign to the first stage of Christianity. Doubtless a keen eye might early have detected a shadow of

the coming transformation. Imperial Rome was a towering and majestic form in the ancient world. Even Christians, who were supposed to cast their gaze beyond earthly grandeur, felt a certain awe before the proud mistress of the world. This appears distinctly in Tertullian, who conceived of Roman dominion as co-extensive with the temporal order of things, so that when Rome should fall the world would come to an end.[1] Evidently this feeling was fitted to lend more or less of aid to the dignity of the Roman bishop. If in the fourth century the imperial associations of the newly-founded capital of the east speedily lifted its bishop above all eastern rivals, making Constantinople to take precedence in episcopal rank of Jerusalem, Antioch, and Alexandria, the grander associations of Rome could hardly fail to do still more for its bishop.

The evolution of the papacy is adequately explained. The institution came by no sudden bound into the world, but by a slower process than that which transformed French feudalism into the autocratic rule of Louis XIV. Even by the sixth century the evolution was only partially accomplished. The whole history of the councils in the fourth, fifth, and sixth centuries reveals, at most, an aristocratic, not a monarchical type of church government. The insignificant part fulfilled by the Roman bishop in calling these great assemblies, in presiding over them, and in confirming their decisions, makes the supposition that the Church of that era attached monarchical authority to him, in anything like the sense of the Vatican decree, grossly far-fetched and unhistoric. Broad facts like these weigh vastly more than any flattering tributes which interested individuals, seeking the aid of a powerful ally, amid the sharp contentions of the time, may have rendered.

If we go back to the first three centuries we find no indication that any further dignity was accorded to the Roman bishop than would inevitably fall to the episcopal head in a

[1] Apologeticus, xxxii.

great apostolic seat and centre of earthly dominion; that is, a certain primacy in honor and actual influence. Two or three sentences are indeed on record, which, when wrenched out of their connection, may be made to render a sort of testimony in favor of the Romish theory. Thus Tertullian referred to the Roman bishop as "Pontifex Maximus." But he applied the pagan title in manifest irony, connecting it with a decree which he said could not be posted with propriety except "on the very gates of the sensual appetites."[1] Irenæus is thought to have spoken of the necessity of agreeing with the Roman church. But in the connection he was thinking of Rome, not as a centre of ecclesiastical authority, but as a depository of tradition, which, as being received from the illustrious apostles Peter and Paul, and handed down through an unbroken succession of bishops or presbyters, he believed to be incorrupt.[2] His thought was identical with that of Tertullian, who said that the capricious exegesis of heretics must be met by an appeal to the churches of apostolic origin, Christians in the East appealing to Smyrna, Corinth, Philippi, and Ephesus, while Christians in Italy could most conveniently appeal to Rome.[3] Irenæus, writing in the West, naturally fixed upon the only apostolic seat in that section of the empire. As his own words plainly show he mentioned Rome simply as an eminent example of a class.[4] His conduct,

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[1] De Pudicitia, i.

[2] Cont. Haer. iii. 3. 2.

[3] De Praescript, Haer. xxxii., xxxvi.

[4] The comments passed on the reference of Irenæus to the position of the Roman church are based on a not uncommon understanding of his words. If, with William Bright, we suppose *necesse est* to denote simple necessity, instead of obligation, and *convenire ad* to mean to come together to, rather than to agree with, then obviously any tribute to the Roman church which is contained in the words of Irenæus is very much retrenched. The conclusion, in that case, would be that he represents Rome as being not so much the source of orthodoxy as a reservoir of the same, on account of an ingathering of Christians from all parts of the Church (The Roman See in the Early Church, pp. 31–36).

moreover, supplies a comment on his meaning, since he boldly opposed the intolerant course of the Roman bishop, Victor, in the Easter controversy, and advised the churches contrary to his policy.[1] Cyprian, in one instance, associated the notion of sacerdotal unity with Peter and Rome.[2] But nothing is clearer than that he thought of them rather as means of *symbolizing* that unity than as having any monopoly of sacerdotal prerogatives. He expressed his theory of church government in these significant words: "The episcopate is one, each part of which is held by each one for the whole."[3] Still further, in open opposition to the attempt of the Roman bishop, Stephen, to press his own views on the subject of re-baptism, he declared: "Every bishop, according to the allowance of his liberty and power, has his own proper right of judgment, and can no more be judged by another than he himself can judge another."[4]

So the most noted tributes to the Roman bishop in the first three centuries are found on examination to be no expression of the specific papal theory. It required centuries of industrious aggression and assertion, aided by great forgeries, to enthrone that theory even within the limits of Latin Christendom.

In connection with the long current assumption in Roman Catholic circles respecting the infallibility of the Church, the doctrine of the unqualified supremacy of the pope, as formulated in the canon which was cited, involves by necessary inference his dogmatic infallibility. The Vatican decree on this subject, therefore, only gave explicit statement to an implication of the declaration on administrative supremacy. The decree reads as follows: "We teach and define that it is a dogma divinely revealed: that the Roman pontiff when he

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[1] Eusebius, Hist. Eccl. v. 24.
[2] Epist. liv., ad Cornelium.
[3] De Unitate Eccl.
[4] Third Council of Carthage, A.D. 256.

speaks *ex cathedra*, that is, when in discharge of the office of pastor and doctor of all Christians, by virtue of his supreme apostolical authority, he defines a doctrine regarding faith and morals to be held by the universal Church, by the divine assistance promised to him in blessed Peter, is possessed of that infallibility with which the divine Redeemer willed that his Church should be endowed for defining doctrine regarding faith or morals; and that therefore such definitions of the Roman pontiff are irreformable of themselves, and not from the consent of the Church. But if any one — which may God avert — presume to contradict this our definition: let him be anathema."

The field of infallibility, as thus defined, is evidently a very broad one. Almost any important matter involves a point of faith or morals, and is therefore a possible subject for an infallible decision. The requisition that the decision should be given in an *ex cathedra* manner is more of a limitation; but even this is not a very definite restriction. For, while the language of the decree implies that an *ex cathedra* decision is one directed, in the papal intention, to the whole Church, it does not say that it must be formally so directed. A decision may be implicitly for the whole Church which is not explicitly addressed to all the faithful. That a decision of the former kind may be *ex cathedra* has never been authoritatively denied; and there is slight danger, also, that a denial of this sort will ever appear, since it would abridge rather inconveniently the force of this and that papal utterance. In fact, various infallibilists have taught that a formal address to the whole Church is not a necessary characteristic of an *ex cathedra* document.

In estimating the merits of the dogma it is legitimate to array against its credibility every Roman Catholic tenet which is discordant with reason or revelation, since every one of these has received the papal sanction. But, foregoing this means of criticism, we will note the following considerations:

1. The fact that enormous frauds paved the way to the declaration of papal infallibility, if not a proper disproof of the dogma, certainly invites to a suspicious attitude towards its claims. As to the fact stated, the evidence is of compelling force. A candid historian cannot deny that a strain of increased papal assumption was filtered into the literature of the Church from the pseudo-Isidore decretals which were concocted in the ninth century. No more can he deny that the forgery of the thirteenth century which deceived Thomas Aquinas — leading him to quote in favor of papal infallibility sentences that the fathers, to whom they were attributed, had never written — had a great effect upon theological opinion in the following centuries. Let it be granted that the Ultramontane party, as represented in the Vatican Council, did not openly defend these fictions; it is still true that a majority of the party had been greatly influenced by them. Not only had their thoughts been shaped by inferences drawn from the forgeries, but portions of the very forgeries themselves had been served up to them in works which entered fundamentally into the education of the priesthood, especially in the Latin nations. Liguori, for example, a writer held in extraordinary repute, repeats no inconsiderable portion of the hoary falsehoods.[1] In short Döllinger was guilty of no presumption when he offered to prove that the bishops of the Romance countries — Italy, Spain, South America, and France — had been very largely misled by fabricated and garbled proofs.[2]

2. Only by the most extravagant and arbitrary interpretation can any warrant be found in the Scriptures for papal infallibility. The Vatican decree cites three passages: Matt. xvi. 18, Luke xxii. 32, John xxi. 15–17. Did ever feat of interpreter compare with this? A declaration that Peter should fulfill an honorable part in the founding of the Church, a prayer that

[1] Döllinger und Reusch, Geschichte der Moralstreitigkeiten in der römisch-katholischen Kirche seit dem sechzehnten Jahrhundert, I. 403–412.

[2] Letter to Archbishop von Scherr, March 28, 1871.

the apostle, worsted by temptation, might not fall into a fatal apostasy from his Master, a threefold exhortation to pastoral fidelity, which probably reminded Peter of his threefold denial, — these items prove the Roman bishop infallible, though none of them proves as much for Peter himself, and one of them might as well be cited in proof of a needed conversion of the pope as in support of his infallibility! Surely the fathers may be pardoned for not having discovered papal infallibility in these passages. As Döllinger contends, none of them applied the passages in the Vatican sense. It is true that Pope Agatho in 680 cited the verse in Luke; but his own words, as well as the conditions of the case, make it far more credible that he meant to claim indefectibility in the sense of Bossuet than infallibility in the sense of the Vatican decree. Bossuet, while denying strict infallibility, believed that the Roman see could not be persistently given to error.

3. The dogma of papal infallibility is contradicted by broad ranges of historical facts. Whatever may have been the scope of the oversight exercised by the Roman bishop within the limits of his own patriarchate, the record of the early Church as a whole shows that it had no idea that doctrinal disputes could be settled by the short method of appealing to him. They were fought out on the arena of debate until carried before an ecumenical council. To be sure, we are reminded in high-sounding phrase that the great Council of Chalcedon exclaimed over the letter of Leo the Great: "Peter has spoken through Leo!" But the exclamation is of small consequence. Words every whit as complimentary were uttered in the same breath respecting Cyril of Alexandria, and Leo's letter was approved simply because its teaching was agreeable to a majority of the assembly.[1] No less garbled is the alleged declaration of Augustine: "Rome has spoken; the cause is ended." Augustine joined the sentence

[1] Mansi, vi. 971.

of two councils with that of the Roman bishop.[1] Moreover, he did not hesitate, together with the North African clergy, to correct the Roman bishop, Zosimus, in his dealing with the Pelagians. He also excused Cyprian's position respecting rebaptism, on the ground that the Church in his age had not rendered an authoritative decision on that subject;[2] which is just the same as saying that the voice of the Roman bishop was not authoritative, that dignitary having already given his decision in very plain terms.

Another broad range of facts, equally adverse to papal infallibility, is the chain of anathemas fulminated against Honorius I as a teacher and patron of heresy. Three ecumenical councils — the sixth, seventh, and eighth — concurred in the anathema. Pope Leo II solemnly approved it, and after him it was subscribed to by the popes for no less than three centuries. It is not necessary to inquire into the exact nature of the trespass of Honorius. The Church which, for centuries, condemned him on charge of heresy, without once taking care to utter in connection with its anathemas a saving clause for papal infallibility, could not have cherished the notion of infallibility in the Vatican sense. The doctrine, therefore, lacks the mark of valid tradition.

A third range of facts is supplied by the moral record of the popes. No well-informed person will deny that worldly-minded and depraved men have sometimes gained the papal office. No thoughtful person will deny that the almost boundless adulation, which is awarded to the incumbent of the high office, is itself likely to be a source of powerful temptations, against which even the best have no perfect safeguard. To make infallibility, therefore, an attachment of the papal office is to divorce it from all necessary connection with personal sanctity; and this is equivalent to affirming a magic which is unworthy of a place in any spiritual creed.

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[1] Serm. cxxxi. [2] De Bapt. cont. Donat. Lib. ii. n. 5.

A kindred range of facts is found in the part which the popes have taken in the long tragedy of religious persecution. Scores of them were implicated in the work of organizing and supporting the Inquisition. Leo X, in an *ex cathedra* document, condemned Luther's affirmation that the burning of heretics is contrary to the will of the Holy Spirit. The most recent popes have denounced the principle of religious tolerance. Even Leo XIII, by quoting as authority the encyclical of Gregory XVI, issued in 1832, and the Syllabus of Errors, published by Pius IX, as well as by utterances of his own, has indicated that a Roman Catholic power commits a grievous sin when it tolerates any form of dissenting worship, except under the pressure of practical necessity.[1] Religious tolerance, as it exists to-day, has been introduced in the face of papal precepts and prohibitions, and either it must be wrong in principle, or the popes are not the appointed guides of the race.

4. The dogma of papal infallibility is contradicted by many specific facts. The following is to be regarded as only a partial enumeration: (1) Liberius, as we are assured by Athanasius and Jerome, subscribed to a Semi-Arian creed. (2) Vigilius vacillated in a most disreputable way between opposition and consent in his attitude toward the dogmatic schemes of Justinian. (3) Gelasius I used language which distinctly implies that the substance of bread and wine is not changed or eliminated by consecration. (4) Honorius I taught the Monothelite heresy in epistles which were implicitly addressed to the whole Church, and which Hefele, one of the most competent of recent Roman Catholic historians, declares to have been given *ex cathedra*. (5) Innocent III denied the immaculate conception of the Virgin,

[1] Epist. Encyc. de Civitatum Constitutione Cristiana, Nov. 1, 1885; Epist. ad Card. Vicarium Monaco la Valetta, June 26, 1878; Litterae Encyc. ad Episcopos Italiae, Feb. 15, 1882; Epist., July 19, 1889 (to the Emperor of Brazil).

whereas Pius IX made it a dogma. (6) The Council of Constance declared the pope to be, both in matters of faith and administration, an authority secondary to the council. Martin V expressed his assent to the decisions of this council consummated in regular sessions, and also issued a formal requirement for an acknowledgment of the ecumenical character of the assembly. To these decisions, so far as they bear upon the papal office, those of the Vatican Council are diametrically opposed. So pope and council at Constance contradict pope and council at Rome. (7) Eugenius IV, in an elaborate decree addressed to the Armenians, gave as essential to the sacrament of penance a formula which the Greek Church never used, and which the Latin Church itself did not employ for eleven centuries. He also defined some of the other sacraments of the Roman list in a way which assailed their validity as they had been practiced in the earlier ages. (8) Adrian VI, in a work republished after his election to the papacy, declared it certain that the Roman pontiff could fall into and decree error in matters of faith. (9) Paul V, Urban VIII, and Alexander VII took a responsible part in the condemnation of the Copernican theory as contrary to Scripture and savoring of heresy. (10) Clement XI, in the bull *Unigenitus*, reprobated sentences which may reasonably be considered the equivalents of New Testament statements, and assailed one of the plainest dictates of common morality by condemning the assertion that "the fear of an unjust excommunication ought never to hinder us from doing our duty."

In respect to some of these instances there may be a chance to take refuge in technicality. But technicality is a shabby and artificial refuge. To refine on the precise way in which the pope must speak, in order to deliver himself infallibly, is to discredit the notion of his infallibility in the sight of clear practical intelligence. If we are not required to believe him when he faces to the west, there is minor occasion for reposing entire confidence in him when he faces to the east.

In the aristocratic theory of the Orthodox Greek Church, and of the High Church party in the Anglican establishment, the stress is upon the episcopal office, viewed as held in continuous succession from the apostles. Only that ecclesiastical organization, it is contended, which has bishops, standing in the unbroken line of descent from the apostles as respects their ordination, is any part of the true Church. In objection to this theory it is to be remarked: —

1. If episcopacy, in the sense defined, is so necessary, that the company of professing Christians which lacks it is without all proper church institutions and sacraments, we should expect to find it clearly prescribed in the New Testament. But such is not the case. Episcopacy of the Anglican or Greek type is not even brought to view in the New Testament writings, much less set forth as a perpetual requirement. The only bishops who figure there are officers of local churches; and as such they are mentioned in the plural, and in various connections are apparently identified with elders or presbyters.[1] It is barely possible that before the death of the Apostle John, a distinction began to be made within the board of presbyters by the impartation of increased dignity and prerogative to the president of the board. But the New Testament makes no mention even of such an incipient episcopate; and, if it be supposed to have arisen before the close of the first century, it still remains true that no one is in condition to prove that apostolic authority, as distinct from a natural evolution, brought it about. Bishop Lightfoot expresses the most that can be claimed, on the warrant of known facts, for the connection of episcopacy with the apostolic era, when he says: "It is clear that at the close of the apostolic age, the two lower orders of the threefold ministry were firmly and widely established; but traces of the third and highest

[1] Acts xx. 17, 28; Titus i. 5–9. Compare Phil. i. 1; 1 Tim. iii. 1–9; 1 Pet. v. 1, 2.

order, the episcopal, properly so-called, are few and indistinct. For the opinion hazarded by Theodoret, and adopted by many later writers, that the same officers in the Church who were first called apostles came afterwards to be designated as bishops, is baseless." [1] The same eminent scholar remarks further of the evidences in the case: "They show that the episcopate was created out of the presbytery. They show that this creation was not so much an isolated act as a progressive development, not advancing everywhere at a uniform rate, but exhibiting at one and the same time different stages of growth in different churches." In view of these facts, no proper basis is left for the doctrine of a necessary apostolic succession in a line of bishops. An institution which was unknown to the first generation of Christians, and which is not proved to have been imposed by apostolic authority upon even the first generation to which it was known, cannot without great arbitrariness be exalted into a perpetual test of ecclesiastical legitimacy.

If one prefers to modify the conception of the rise of the episcopate, as contained in the sketch just given, by introducing Harnack's conclusion, according to which the primitive bishop, as being in particular the almoner of the congregation and the superintendent of its worship, was, from the first, distinguished from the simple presbyter, we are still remote from a historical ground for the High Church contention. Almoners and superintendents of worship, commonly subsisting in the plural in connection with each local church, are poorly adapted to illustrate any sort of hierarchical conception of the episcopate.[2]

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[1] First Dissertation on Paul's Epistle to the Philippians.

[2] There is good evidence that in some of the principal churches the plural episcopate obtained in the second Christian generation as well as in the first. "It was a plural episcopate to which St. Paul referred in the church at Philippi, and it was still a plural episcopate in the churches of Rome and Corinth at the close of the first century as also in the community described in the Didache. What seems like an allusion to a single bishop in 1 Tim. iii. 1. 2 (cf. Titus i. 7)

2. It savors of the incredible to suppose that the continued existence of the Christian Church was made by divine appointment dependent upon the integrity of a succession which no one can prove to have been truly maintained. As Archbishop Whately has remarked, "There is not a minister in all Christendom who is able to trace up with any approach to certainty his own spiritual pedigree."[1] "If we should know," says Frederic Myers, "without dispute, the names of all the persons who have filled any particular see, from the apostles' time to our own, and the names of the persons by whom they were consecrated, this would go but a little way to the proof that any apostolic gift had been duly transmitted through the medium of this succession. For that some scheme of means is essential to the conferring of such a gift by one man on another will be admitted. Then what the essential means are must first be indisputably determined; and then whether these means have been in each case strictly observed. The only proof which could be received as satisfactory in a case where such tremendous results depend upon the alternative must be one which shall afford a reasonable probability that, in every one of the distinct terms of the series of ordinations between the apostles' times and our own, this scheme of means has been observed uniformly in all essential particulars. Now the evidence which is necessary to the establishing of this is of too complex and subtle a character to be conveyed through the ordinary channels of human testimony. Never in any religion of the world was there heard of anything so difficult as this theory of the transmission of an invisible latent gift of grace for nearly two thousand years being essential to the validity of priestly acts."[2]

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may be a desire to call special attention to the grave importance of the office." (A. V. G. Allen, Christian Institutions, p. 43.)

[1] The Kingdom of Christ. Essay II., § 30.

[2] Catholic Thoughts on the Church of Christ and the Church of England, pp. 102, 103.

3. It cannot be discovered that those who enjoy the benefits of a supposed apostolic succession are notably distinguished, as respects spiritual fruits, from those who are destitute of the grace of which that succession is claimed to be the exclusive channel. It is true that Dr. Pusey and some others have believed themselves to have discovered that pious Anglicans are favored with an element of religious sanctity which is denied to pious Dissenters. But this is an opinion which carries conviction only to a party that is more than willing to be convinced. While it may add to the complacency with which those who entertain it thank God that they are not as other men, it cannot count for aught in any court of evidence. Meanwhile, the fact lies open to the observation of the world that many of those who, according to the High Church phrase, are left to the uncovenanted mercies of God, are so adorned with the Christian graces, that it is a complete puzzle to figure out in what respects they would be better off if they were possessed of God's covenanted mercies. The facts quite unmistakably favor the suspicion that God is larger and more generous than He is represented to be in the High Church theory. It seems to be the truth that, as He has not confined the sunlight to a narrow zone, so He has not bound His grace to lines of episcopal succession.

III. — The Ministry of the Word.

In proportion as the spiritual character of the Church is emphasized, and the notion of a sacerdotal mechanism is put aside, stress falls upon the ministry of the Word as a chief function of the Church. Among the threefold offices of Christ the prophetical is that to which in particular it is heir.

We may grant that the Church reflects in some measure each of the three offices of Christ. It reflects the kingly in so far as it is a coägent with its Divine Head in promoting

His spiritual rule in the earth. It reflects the priestly office in so far as through prayer and self-sacrificing effort it follows up Christ's reconciling work in behalf of the sinful and the unworthy. But the proper fulfillment of these offices is largely identical with a faithful witnessing to Christ and His truth. Taken in the broad sense, the ministry of the Word, or the exposition and enforcement of the truth as it is in Christ, is a foremost part of the service which the Church has to fulfill. It is its high office to be giving men perpetually authentic glimpses of the divine in its most potent aspects as these are contained in the character and reconciling work of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The word "authentic" is to be understood here of course in a relative sense. It is an arbitrary putting of theory in place of fact which predicates infallibility of the Church in its teaching function. As history refutes the papal claim, so it leaves no reasonable ground for supposing any organ of the Church, or the Church as a whole, to be perfectly guarded against error. Nor is it necessary that it should be endowed with a prerogative of Deity, in order to fulfill its vocation in the earth. By constantly returning, in a teachable spirit, to the mirror of divine verities contained in the Bible, it may assure itself of the main tenor of religious truth, and draw out safe and salutary lessons for the practical guidance of men. So long as it pursues this method its errors will not fatally hide the saving light of divine truth, and, moreover, it will be in position to rectify its more serious mistakes; whereas the opposite procedure of treating ecclesiastical decisions as products of infallible authority is a scheme for excluding correction, a scheme supremely adapted to promote fossilization in error. The less respect is due to this form of idolatry from the fact that history teaches that it naturally tends to jealousy of the free use of the Scriptures by the people.

In the ministry of the Word, preaching, or the direct proclamation of the message of truth, as it was a conspicuous

element in the activity of Christ and the apostles, must ever hold a prominent place. But the ministry of the Word is not confined to this means. A prayer, which has as truly a biblical foundation as a sermon, and which affords as persuasive a picture of God's love, or inspires as much awe of His righteousness, fulfills, to this extent, just as truly as the sermon, a ministering of the Word. The well-devised hymn also, as being an embodiment of scriptural truth, only in metrical form and set to music, is also a means for bringing the Word to the ears and hearts of men. In graphic picturing and moving appeal it often vies with the most fervid address. Still further, a genuine ministry of the Word is afforded when Christians in social worship or in private interviews commend gospel promises and truths by a modest and candid narrative of their religious experiences. When such personal testimonies get above the plane of routine and prescription, and are proffered as spontaneous expressions of gratitude, love, and faith, they serve in a special degree to impart a vivid impression of the reality of Christ's relations to men. Once more, a literature which is born of Christian faith and is dominated by the New Testament ideal, whether formally treating of religious themes or not, must be regarded as fulfilling an important office in the ministry of the Word. This function of the Church is thus seen to be inclusive of a wide-reaching activity. While preaching is a leading means of getting the truth of Christ into the thought, and conscience, and feeling of men, it has many efficient allies.

The power of the Word, as ministered through the Church, has both a natural and a supernatural ground. It is naturally effective, since the spiritual wisdom contained in the Word is intrinsically adapted to the deep-lying needs and aspirations of the human spirit. It reaches results above the plane of nature, in that its agency is accompanied by the vitalizing presence of the Holy Spirit. Paul gives the explanation of the profound effect which has attended many a humble proc-

lamation of the Word, when he thus describes his communication to the Corinthians: "I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling. And my speech and my preaching were not in persuasive words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the spirit and of power: that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God."[1]

As was noticed in the discussion of regeneration, the revelation and promulgation of truth are of the nature of an opportunity to the Holy Spirit in carrying forward the work of spiritual renovation. But it is a decided aberration to suppose, as was done by some of the dogmatists of the seventeenth and the eighteenth century, that the whole virtue of the Holy Spirit has gone, so to speak, into the words of the sacred canon, and apart from them there is no longer any sphere for His activity. Such a view is a species of deism, a thrusting of the second cause into the place of the first. No collection of writings can possibly define the scope of the Holy Spirit's agency. While the contents of the Scriptures furnish ready and copious materials for spiritual impressions, no one has any warrant for saying that the Holy Spirit never works apart from these materials in shaping the thoughts and impulses of human souls. That point of view would exclude Him from all effective contact with the vast aggregate of men who have no means of acquaintance with scriptural sayings. Christ's declaration, that God is more willing to give the Holy Spirit than earthly parents are to give good gifts to their children, means naturally something more than that it is His good pleasure that men should have a free opportunity to read or hear the contents of a collection of sacred books. Only a generation which has drifted away from the intense biblical view of the divine immanence could harbor such a theory as that in question.

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[1] 1 Cor. ii. 3–5.

IV. — Prayer as Related to Christian Brotherhood.

New Testament teaching and Christian thought generally assume that a social function belongs to prayer, that every true child of God will have the disposition to pray for others. The obligation to this expression of good will is not open to question; neither can there be any occasion to doubt that prayer in this sense is fruitful of subjective benefit. It serves to lead the petitioner in mind and heart both toward God and toward his fellows. The only question for serious consideration respects its objective efficiency. Against this, it must be granted, a somewhat plausible challenge can be brought. It can be argued, for example, that God, as being perfectly benevolent, is ready to bestow upon those who may be the objects of our prayers all the blessings, and especially those of a spiritual nature, which they are qualified to receive; and so He has no need to wait for our petitions. In answer to this objection we may note: —

1. Prayer for others is an unquenchable impulse in those who have the divine treasure and are conscious of its worth. It is a spontaneous outflow of good will and is not subject to prohibition. This fact may not afford an intelligible account of the objective efficacy of prayer; but it certainly suggests that the notion of such efficacy cannot be illusory. It is hard to suppose that the spiritual world is so constituted that a necessary spiritual function should fail altogether of that which is its special aim.

2. An intrinsic connection between the subjective and the objective provides for a certain objective efficacy of prayer. In sympathetically praying for others we place ourselves in a favorable attitude for receiving and fulfilling in their behalf divine suggestions of such ministries as may be best adapted to promote their well-being.

3. Expressions of friendly interest and good-will have a natural efficacy to reinforce the effect of religious teaching,

and to incline men to give heed to salutary counsel. Prayer for others belongs among these expressions. The knowledge that one is lovingly remembered before the divine throne may well be to him an incentive to look seriously to his own duty and privilege.

4. It is possible that there may be some subtle interrelation between souls, so that the earnest persistent concern of one for another, even if it is not distinctly brought to the knowledge of the person upon whom it is expended, may yet be not wholly destitute of influence upon his thought and feeling. This point, it may be granted, is too speculative to receive much emphasis; but, since scientific opinion is not altogether intolerant of the notion of telepathy, the suggestion of a hidden means of interaction between souls may be worth stating, in opposition to a precipitate verdict against the objective utility of prayer.

5. Both on scriptural and rational grounds God is to be considered a factor in all outpouring of benevolent desire. He is coägent in every normal prayer. We are, therefore, only representing God as consistently following up His own action when we suppose Him to accord to prayer a real office in the extension of goodness and blessedness in the world.

V. — The Sacraments in General.

The subject of the sacraments bears an intimate relation to that of the ministry of the Word. As Augustine apprehended, a sacrament is "a kind of visible word."[1] It presents truth to the eye, serving much the same purpose which is fulfilled by well-designed pictures. To specify more closely, we may say that the use or purpose of the sacraments is embraced in three main particulars: (1) they are special means of solemnly

[1] Tract. in Joan. lxxx.

confessing discipleship; (2) they are signs of divine truth and grace; (3) they are seals or tokens of God's benevolent will.

Any voluntary partaking of the sacraments is a solemn declaration of personal allegiance to the Lord Jesus Christ and of faith in Him as the Saviour of men. In this point of view they serve an eminent practical end. But the best part of their worth is not apprehended in a consideration of what the participant gives, but rather in a contemplation of what is given to him. In a vivid way the sacraments set before him the great benefits of the new dispensation — the cleansing, the forgiveness, and the fellowship which are provided thereby. They are divinely chosen signs; and just because they are divinely chosen they are more than signs. The facts of the economy of grace being supposed, the sacraments would be apt signs even were they chosen by men. But, being divinely chosen, they are distinct memorials of God's wish that men should be convinced of His benevolent will, and apprehend the largeness of His grace. In view of this significance they are seals or tokens. They make visible proclamation of the consoling truth that he who fulfills the conditions of the gospel call may surely count on a share in the blessings provided by redeeming love.

In a certain sense the sacraments may be termed means of grace. They are such in essentially the same sense as the ministry of the Word. In so far as they image truth which is adapted to the deep needs and aspirations of men they have a natural virtue for spiritual effects. So far as the truth which they image affords a fit instrument for the Holy Spirit, they are accessory to results which are above the plane of nature. No virtue beyond this needs to be assumed for the sacraments. At least, no scriptural sentence requires such assumption, and no rational construction can be given to the same. The only conceivable ways in which a physical instrument can be made subservient to spiritual effects is by sug-

gestion of truth, or by serving as a means or occasion in relation to a spiritual agent; and that the sacraments afford any means or fit occasion of working to the Holy Spirit, which He does not have in kind apart from them, waits to be proved. It is a magical pharmacy, and out of harmony with the spiritual nature of Christianity, which supposes that physical things can fulfill a remedial function for human souls in other ways than those specified. Christ should be understood to have put a veto on all sacramental materialism in these words: "It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I have spoken unto you are spirit, and are life."[1]

In the early Church the word sacrament had a very indefinite range, being applied to a variety of rites and also to the more significant events and truths of the new dispensation. The Roman Catholic list of seven sacraments was propounded by Peter Lombard in the twelfth century, and was sanctioned by ecclesiastical authority near the middle of the fifteenth century. Evidently it is largely a matter of option, or human agreement, what extension shall be given to the term "sacraments." The important consideration is that no other rites, either in the Roman Catholic list of seven, or in any other list, stand on a parity with baptism and the Lord's supper. These, if we may trust a primitive and dominant tradition, were distinctly enjoined by Christ. They stand forth as the peculiar rites of the new dispensation. They have also a pronounced symbolical import. On the other hand, all rites besides these which have been styled sacraments are destitute of credible proof that they were instituted by Christ, and some of them are also wanting in respect of a distinct symbolical import. It is, therefore, in the interest of a consistent terminology to class baptism and the Lord's supper by themselves as the sacraments of the Christian Church.

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[1] John vi. 63.

VI. — Baptism.

Baptism in its Christian use served from the beginning as an initiatory rite. It signified, as the act of the candidate, the entrance or the open confession of entrance, into a new religious relation, namely, that of discipleship toward the Lord Jesus Christ. As a divinely chosen symbol it represents the entrance into a new religious state, a state appropriate to the new relation, that is, a state of cleansing from the guilt and pollution of sin. Cleansing, washing, making new by taking away the old ingrained corruption — this is essentially the typical sense of baptism, as is to be concluded from the natural association of water with purification, from the Old Testament symbolism, and from the tenor of the New Testament references.[1] It is true that Paul in two or three instances associated baptism with burial and resurrection.[2] But, though a considerable number of theological writers, moved in part by a controversial interest, have been inclined to make this representation the standard for New Testament thought, it is decidedly more consonant with the sum total of biblical statements to regard the Pauline sentences as expressive of a secondary association of baptism than of its primary and more obvious import. It is an instance of specializing after the somewhat subtle manner to which the apostle was much given. By his absorbing interest in the thought of Christ's death he was led to substitute for the general notion of purification and renovation, which belongs to baptism, the more special notion of coming to newness of life by dying, so to speak, with Christ and rising again. The figure is Pauline, natural to one who made so much of mystical union with Christ in His death. But Paul himself seems not to have been tied to this particular

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[1] Ps. li. 2, 7; Isa. i. 16, 18; Jer. iv. 14; Ezek. xvi. 9; John iii. 5; Acts xxii. 16; Eph. v. 26; Titus iii. 5; 1 Pet. iii. 21.

[2] Rom. ii. 3–5; Col. ii. 12.

view of baptism;[1] so that there is very slight occasion to take it as the precise expression of the meaning of the rite, as opposed to the idea of cleansing and renewal suggested by the major part of the data at hand.

In the first days of Christianity, baptism was coincident ordinarily with a religious crisis. Immediately upon the exercise of faith in the person and saving office of Christ it was administered as the proper expression of that faith and the seal of discipleship. Falling thus at the initiation of a new life, and being often attended with tokens of the presence and power of the Holy Spirit, it was naturally very closely associated with the regeneration which it symbolized. Under a different order of conditions, where the new life initiated by faith is not commonly coincident with the era of baptism, it has properly a less intimate association with regeneration. It may still be given a certain association therewith, in that the grace which goes with its proper reception is in the line of regenerating efficiency, an increment in the new life. But to make baptism distinctly the instrument or occasion of regeneration, under a scheme which commonly interposes an interval between self-surrendering faith in Christ and the administration of the rite, is to banish faith utterly from the primacy which the New Testament accords to it in the appropriation of salvation. On page after page there is a direct or indirect inculcation of the maxim, 'Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved," whereas baptism is associated with the grasp of saving benefits only in isolated instances. In fact it is given no more positive association with regeneration than is the ministry of the Word;[2] so that it would be just about as proper and scriptural to limit regeneration to an occasion of sermon-hearing as to limit it to a baptismal occasion. In a true perspective of New Testa-

[1] Eph. v. 26.

[2] John xvii. 17; James i. 18; 1 Pet. i. 23; 2 Pet. i. 4.

ment teaching it is clear enough that no external transaction whatever stands on anything like a parity with that interior central act of man's religious personality which is called faith, the profoundly ethical and religious transaction by which one delivers himself up to God as revealed in Jesus Christ. This is the great condition of salvation, apart from which there is no warrant for supposing that any external worship or exercise in hearing can avail aught, and with which there is no strict necessity for any ceremonial adjunct. It is true that Christ is reported to have said to Nicodemus, except a man be born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. But any one who will read the whole passage cannot fail to see that the main stress is upon the office of the Spirit and not upon that of water. He may observe also that the reference to water appears to be introduced by way of explanation, or for the purpose of elucidating to Nicodemus the meaning of re-birth, the association here of water with the Spirit being analagous to the association of fire with the Spirit in the synoptical representation.[1] The whole sentence, therefore, may be regarded as teaching that unless the Holy Spirit works in a man that cleansing or renewal which is symbolized by the use of water, he can be no fit subject for the kingdom of God. That the same Christ, who rebuked the ceremonial scrupulosity and littleness of the Pharisees, and declared so emphatically the readiness of the heavenly Father to bestow the Holy Spirit in response to sincere asking, meant to represent the renewing operation of the Spirit as bound to a ceremonial use of water is simply inconceivable.[2] The experience of the apostles certainly interposed a very decided barrier against the harboring by them of any such ultra-ritualistic notion. Peter, for example, was a witness of the unmistakable tokens of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon Cornelius

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[1] Luke iii. 16; Matt. iii. 11.

[2] Matt. xv. 1–20; Mark vii. 1–23; Luke xi. 13.

and his friends, antecedent to their reception of baptism, and himself asked, "Can any man forbid the water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we?"[1]

By a comparatively early exaggeration, stress upon the propriety and utility of baptism passed over into an assertion of its necessity. From the days of Augustine it was the current opinion in the Latin Church that no one can be saved in default of baptism, except on the score of a desire and purpose which would secure the rite if the opportunity should be offered. As infants cannot furnish these compensations, there was understood to be no chance of their salvation in case they should die unbaptized. In the modern Roman Catholic Church, though an occasional theologian has dissented from this view, it has continued to hold the place of a standard belief. Perrone says: "Infants departing from this life without baptism, do not attain to eternal salvation";[2] and he adds that this proposition is a part of the established faith — a conclusion which is unavoidable if strict dogmatic authority be affirmed of the Tridentine Catechism, since it plainly conditions the salvation of infants upon baptism.[3]

On the merits of such a doctrine, it is enough to say that it turns the divine benevolence into an enigmatic and unmeaning phrase. The God who excludes countless millions of souls from the kingdom of heaven for a mere lack of a ceremonial application of water must in consistency be regarded as caring little or nothing for souls. In some respects this inference of

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[1] Acts x. 47.

[2] Praelect. Theol., De Hom.

[3] Pars II. Cap. ii. 31, 34. Nihil magis necessarium videri potest, quam ut [fideles] doceantur, omnibus hominibus baptismi legem a Domino praescriptam esse ita, ut, nisi per baptisimi gratiam Deo renascantur, in sempiternam miseriam et interitum a parentibus, sive illi fideles, sive infideles sint, procreentur. . . . Quum pueris infantibus nulla alia salutis comparandae ratio, nisi eis baptismus praebeatur, relicta sit: facile intelligitur, quam gravi culpa illi sese obstringant, qui eos sacramenti gratia diutius, quam necessitas postulet, carere patiantur.

an intemperate sacramentalism is worse than the dogma of absolute reprobation. The predestinarian, making the number of the reprobate God's secret, can at least entertain the hope that it is a small minority of the race. But the ultra sacramentalist is confronted by the indisputable fact that no small fraction of the human family dies without baptism in infancy, and so, from his point of view, is hopelessly doomed. Moreover, it is difficult to exclude the essence of the doctrine of unconditional reprobation in connection with belief in the necessary doom of unbaptized infants. If those who live to adult years have any real opportunity either to receive baptism or to afford compensations for the same, then those who die unbaptized in infancy are discriminated against. They appear as a class that is damned without having had the slightest chance by personal agency to escape damnation. If their early death be counted purely accidental, it argues indifference and arbitrariness in God to hinge their eternal destiny on accidents which they had no power to avoid. If, on the other hand, their early death is reckoned as a part of a providential order, then their damnation is made to appear as a part of God's regular scheme. In any case the spirit, if not the precise form, of the doctrine of arbitrary reprobation cleaves to this theory of an overdrawn sacramentalism respecting the necessity of baptism. The atrocity of the theory is indeed mitigated to some extent by the supposition that the punishment of unbaptized infants consists in being deprived of a good, rather than in any positive infliction of pain. Still, the theory outrages the thought of divine justice and benevolence, since the good of which the unbaptized are said to be deprived is the proper goal of the human spirit, and to be numbered with the lost, as opposed to the saved, cannot mean anything less than an immeasurable calamity, unless language be used with utter frivolity.

Those who insist upon the necessity of baptism very naturally credit it with a decisive effect even in purely passive sub-

jects, such as are infants. But no good warrant for this opinion can be found in Scripture, reason, or experience. It cannot be found in Scripture, for that says not a word about the effect of baptism on subjects who are incapable of exercising faith or confessing discipleship. It cannot be found in reason, for there is no more of natural opportunity for the working of the Holy Spirit in the infant that receives baptism than in the one that is denied the rite; and if, accordingly, a saving transformation is wrought in the one and refused to the other, an extravagant premium is put on ritual as opposed to souls. It cannot be found in experience, for no one is able to discover that baptized subjects are not required to meet every demand of personal conscious agency which is imposed upon the unbaptized, in order to the initiation of genuine piety of heart and life. That the Holy Spirit is near to the soul of the young child, and has ways of shaping or counteracting its most initial moral tendencies, may be true; but that His agency in such a subject is tied to the rite of baptism, or is peculiarly operative therein, is an ecclesiastical fancy for which no good warrant has ever been discovered.

The propriety of infant baptism is not measured by the extent of its immediate effect upon its subject. On the part of believing parents, it is a solemn expression of their wish to dedicate their offspring to the Lord, and to have them partakers of all the sanctities of the Christian religion. On the part of the children, it is a reminder, as soon as they come to years of understanding, that they ought not to count themselves aliens to Christ's family, but as already having a distinct relation thereto, which it behoves them to carry forward to perfection. This relation, it is true, should not be given too much of the character of a finality. After generous room has been conceded to the charitable assumption that the child trained in Christian teachings will become in spirit and in truth a disciple of Christ, his own choice and line of conduct

should be allowed to determine his standing as being within or without the circle of church fellowship proper. Meanwhile, the consciousness of an already existing relation to religious society may naturally serve as a motive for reflection and for choice in the right direction.

Doubtless the silence of the New Testament may be urged in objection to the practice of infant baptism. But two considerations serve to break very largely the force of this objection. In the first place, no detailed treatment is given to the subject of baptism in the New Testament. In the second place, aside from a slender thread of narrative, the whole of the New Testament is made up of discourses and epistles addressed to the adult understanding on the great themes of the Christian religion. Naturally the conditions of baptism that are specified in such a subject-matter correspond with the standing of the persons immediately contemplated, and are defined to be in particular repentance and faith. The Jews in making proselytes imposed analogous demands, without, however, implying that those born in a Jewish household must meet these demands before they could receive the sign of the Old Testament covenant. So the demands which are put forth in the essentially missionary messages of the New Testament are not necessarily interpreted as rigidly applying to those born in Christian households. Moreover, it may be noticed that silence about the baptism of children is paralleled by silence about the method of their salvation. Does the latter prove that they are not subjects of salvation? Lack of specific treatment of either point is no decisive means of judgment. We are thus directed to general grounds of inference, and note the following in favor of infant baptism: —

1. The religious relation of the children of believers was acknowledged under the old dispensation, and was signalized by applying to them the covenant sign. As Dorner argues, "The Church cannot be poorer than the synagogue, the new covenant cannot express less love than the covenant of circum-

cision, whose benefits applied also to children. The first sermon of Peter alluded to this."[1]

2. Christ's reception of little children and the blessing which He pronounced upon them intimate that they are proper subjects of religious recognition.[2] Paul's words, also, are indicative of the conviction that the children of believing parents are properly viewed as having a distinctive relation to the Christian brotherhood.[3] Now in baptism parents and Church unite in giving solemn recognition of the religious relation in which children are normally conceived to be standing.

3. Early usage, while not decisive, rather favors than excludes the supposition that infant baptism was sanctioned by apostolic practice, at least was not unknown before the close of the apostolic era. Cyprian assumed, at the middle of the third century, together with the bishops associated with him in North Africa, that it was the common duty of parents to have their children baptized soon after their birth.[4] Origen's references to the subject indicate that a like view had place at the same time in the East, and was no recent innovation, since he declares the administration of baptism to infants a matter of apostolic tradition.[5] Tertullian's opposition to it about a half century earlier — mainly on the ground of the inexpediency of placing children, or their sponsors, under the heavy responsibilities of the baptismal covenant — shows that it was being practiced at that date.[6] The same motive which led him to oppose haste in the case of children also led him to advise the postponement of baptism even for adults whose circumstances in life exposed them to considerable temptations. As in this item he seems

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[1] System of Christian Doctrine, § 141.
[2] Matt. xix. 13–15; Mark x. 13–16.
[3] 1 Cor. vii. 14.
[4] Epist. lviii., ad Fidum.
[5] Comm. in epist. ad Rom. v. 9; In Lev. Hom. viii.
[6] De Baptismo, xviii.

to have gone counter to early precedent, so there is little or no guarantee that he respected any good precedent in his dissuasion from infant baptism. Earlier than Tertullian there is no very definite reference to the subject, a fact that is not surprising when we consider the very brief and scanty references to the general topic of baptism in the writings of the second century. A comparison of two passages of Irenæus affords a measure of probability that he had in mind, as he wrote, the custom of baptizing infants.[1]

Among subordinate questions it remains to notice the form of baptism, the relation of John's baptism to the Christian, and the question of the allowable repetition of the rite.

Those who lay great stress upon the form of baptism very commonly take these grounds: (1) The primitive meaning of the word βαπτίζω is to immerse. (2) This meaning was retained intact in connection with the Christian appropriation of the word, since Christ, when He gave the command to baptize, had in mind not merely such a use of water as might symbolize purification and renovation, but distinctively and exclusively the rite of immersion, and designed to make this special mode of using water obligatory for all time.

The first of these points needs very little consideration. Every one admits that words frequently travel away from their original sense, and gain applied and accommodated meanings. Any evidence, therefore, as to the significance of the word *baptizo*, which may have been prevalent in pre-Christian time, affords no more than probability, not decisive proof, as respects its Christian sense. Of the points specified the second is properly entitled to the main consideration. A rational judgment needs to be formed as to Christ's attitude in relation to the Christian rite. Only a fraction of the pertinent considerations is taken into account when it is

[1] Cont. Haer. ii. 22. 4, iii. 17. 1.

assumed that Christ had a mental picture of a particular mode of using water when He gave the command to baptize, or that the apostles had an image of one special way of using water when they spoke of baptism. The glance of Christ's eye or the movement of His thought may have been to a particular kind of lily, when He declared that Solomon's apparel could not compare with its beautiful clothing; but it does not follow that He would not have said the same of other species of flowers equally adapted to vie with Solomon's glory. Similarly He may have had in mind a specific picture of table customs when He instituted a memorial feast, and yet have been remote from the purpose to make out of this order of mental association an inflexible law for the celebration of the eucharistic rite. Applying the illustration, we may say that Christ, borrowing from current ceremonial usage, may have had in mind a particular form of baptismal rite, without placing any considerable stress upon that form, or designing to make it invariably binding. It is plainly not enough to surmise the mental image which He entertained in order to make out an exclusive claim for one special form. It must also be known that His mind, above and beyond the general religious purpose to be served by the rite, was tenacious of the special form, so that He wished to leave no margin for variation in accordance with different conditions and circumstances. But who has the means of knowing this? With all respect to the advocates of the exclusive validity of immersion, it must be affirmed that it is utterly improbable that Christ, in prescribing baptism, was inflexibly tenacious in respect of form, or meant to exclude all margin of variation. A rite typical of a purified and renovated life, and serving as an open confession of discipleship, was the important thing to be secured; and the securing of this much is consistent with a varied use of water. That Christ's attitude of mind was one of tolerance toward accommodation and variety may be argued on two grounds. In the first place, His whole

ministry was characterized by stress upon the spirit, as opposed to exaggerating the value of forms. He was ever calling men to the large and free life of faith and love, not to the narrowness of ceremonial scrupulosity. In the second place, the facts of early Christian history favor the supposition that it was agreeable to the mind of Christ to allow a measure of flexibility in ceremonial requisitions. The language of Cyprian makes it clear that near the middle of the third century sprinkling was counted a valid mode of baptism for the sick.[1] At an earlier date — somewhat uncertain, but probably not remote from the verge of the apostolic era — the so-called "Teaching of the Twelve Apostles" shows that the mode of baptism was allowed to be varied for other conditions than those of sickness, a difficulty as respects access to running water being specified as a sufficient warrant for simply pouring water upon the head of the candidate.[2] The champion of immersion, it is true, may have the courage to say that this flexibility as to mode was of the nature of a corruption. But a community that was moving away from apostolic spirituality would naturally have diverged from the primitive standpoint, not by greater flexibility in usage, but in the way of greater elaboration of forms and punctiliousness in their observance. To suppose that Jesus or Paul was not willing to grant as much liberty in respect of forms as was allowed by the author of a treatise so legal in tone as the "Teaching of the Twelve Apostles," is to suppose the very improbable, not to say the absurd.

In view of these considerations, it becomes a matter of secondary importance to determine what was the standing association of the word *baptizo* in the first century, or what image most naturally went with it in the mind of Christ. Very likely the word was still suggestive, to a considerable extent, of the meaning which pertained to it originally,

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[1] Epist. lxxv. 12, ad Magnum.

[2] Didache, Chap. vii.

namely, immersion. But there are indications that its significance had been broadened, so that it could be used without any conscious reference to a complete submergence in the baptismal element. Thus in the Gospels — not to mention instances where baptism seems to be used as the equivalent of washing[1] — Christ is portrayed as one who should baptize with the Holy Ghost and with fire;[2] but in the Book of Acts the fulfillment is pictured by the descent of tongues of fire upon the heads of the disciples, not by a submergence of the subjects of the baptism. Again, a comparison of chapter i. 5 with chapter ii. 16–18, in the Book of Acts, identifies baptism by the Holy Spirit as baptism by an outpouring. The same identification appears in Peter's account of the baptism of Cornelius.[3]

These are very good evidences that even in New Testament thinking the meaning of baptism was not summed up in immersion. It was, therefore, in the line of scriptural precedent when, in the second century, more than immersion was included under the term, as appears in the option conceded in the "Teaching of the Twelve Apostles," in the custom of styling martyrdom the baptism of blood, and in the fact that the first Latin fathers, instead of translating by *immersio* the Greek word for baptism, simply transferred it into Latin.

Less conclusive than the facts and considerations presented, but yet sufficient to establish a certain probability of latitude under apostolic administration, is the narrative of instances in which the circumstances speak against the credibility of complete immersion — such instances as the baptism of three thousand at Pentecost in the hostile city of Jerusalem, and the baptism of the Philippian jailer and his household in the night by imprisoned evangelists.

If practical considerations are allowed to have any weight,

[1] Luke xi. 38; Mark vii. 4. Compare Heb. ix. 10.
[2] Matt. iii. 11; Mark i. 8; Luke iii. 16.
[3] Acts xi. 16, 17.

it must be granted that the physical element is too prominent in the immersion of adult candidates to make it under all natural and social conditions an ideal rite for a thoroughly rational and spiritual religion. The crucifixion involved in an honest submission to immersion may undoubtedly have its reward; but Christianity is not so much of a monastic scheme that it hinges benefits on any needless bodily austerity.

As Christ associated John the Baptist with the vanishing Old Testament dispensation, rather than placed him distinctly within the new kingdom which He Himself represented,[1] the natural inference is that John's baptism belonged to a preliminary order of things, and so was not properly Christian baptism. This inference is confirmed by the account of those whom Paul baptized at Ephesus notwithstanding they had already received John's baptism.[2]

In general, since baptism is the rite of initiation into the Christian communion, its repetition involves an incongruity. Only in cases where the title to the Christian name, on the part of the communion in whose midst it was administered, is fairly open to question, is it appropriate to ask for its repetition.

VII. — The Lord's Supper.

While baptism is the rite of initiation into Christian fellowship, the Lord's supper is the rite of continued fellowship, on the part of disciples, both with Christ and with one another, and accordingly, in contrast with the former, was designed for frequent repetition.

In a full statement of the significance of the Lord's supper, such as may be gathered from the sum total of New Testament references,[3] the following specifications are in point:

[1] Matt. xi. 11. [2] Acts xix. 1–7.

[3] Matt. xxvi. 26–28; Mark xiv. 22–24; Luke xxii. 19, 20; 1 Cor. x. 15–17, xi. 23–29.

(1) The supper is a memorial of the sacrificial death of Christ, or of His broken body and shed blood. "As often as ye eat this bread and drink this cup, ye proclaim the Lord's death till He come." (2) Inasmuch as the emblems are not merely viewed, but also taken by the communicant, the rite is significant of a close personal relation — the offer of Christ in all the benefits of His passion and the acceptance of Him as thus offered. (3) As being of the Lord's own appointment, it is a token of His gracious will, a seal of the new covenant. (4) As being a response on the part of the communicant to this token, it is a solemn confession of discipleship and a pledge of loyal devotion. (5) Since it brings the disciples of Christ together in the intimacy of a sacred meal, it is significant of their oneness in their head. "The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ? seeing that we, who are many, are one bread, one body: for we all partake of the one bread."

Thus the Lord's supper is a most deep, solemn, and tender message of divine truth. It memorializes the greatest deed of divine love, and invites by its apt emblems to a trustful and affectionate appropriation of the highest grace. If truth is ever utilized by the Holy Spirit for the edification of the disciple, then no reason can be imagined why the rich message of this sacred feast should not be effective of large spiritual benefit to all true participants.

The obvious spiritual meaning of the sacrament is so full and satisfactory that it is very little to the credit of the Church that it ever had the disposition to obscure that meaning by an overgrowth of materialism and magic. The maximum specimen of this overgrowth is seen in the doctrine of transubstantiation, which came to prominence in the eighth and ninth centuries, and obtained its first ecumenical sanction at the Fourth Lateran Council, in 1215. As authoritatively promulgated by the Council of Trent, this doctrine assumes that by the act of consecration the substance of bread and

wine is changed into the substance of Christ's body and blood; and that the entire Christ is under each species (apparent bread and wine), and under every part of each species when separated. In opposition to this vast assumption the following considerations are to be urged:—

1. Exegetically the assumption is entirely unnecessary. It was but a sober instance of Oriental rhetoric when Christ named the bread and wine His body and blood. Parallel instances of a like graphic way of speaking are found in his recorded discourses, as, for example, when He speaks of Himself as the "door" or the "vine." Indeed, it would not have sounded like the language of Christ if He had formally characterized the bread and wine as emblems or symbols. There was no demand in the circumstances of the occasion for such formality and precision. The unsophisticated men who were with Him, being familiar with His manner of speech, and seeing Him intact before themselves, could not have once dreamed that the bread and wine were aught but chosen means to figure the body and blood of their Master. Moreover, in another connection Christ had already taken pains to repudiate the materialistic notion that there was to be any actual eating of His flesh and drinking of His blood, or that any benefit could be derived therefrom.[1]

2. The Roman Catholic doctrine assumes the rationally inconceivable, in that it predicates the transformation of one

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[1] John vi. 63. The discovery in this chapter of a dogmatic discourse on the eucharist is quite at fault. Aside from the light cast by the great interpreting sentence at the close, two facts stand opposed to the supposition of a content of that sort. In the first part of the discourse the same office is assigned to faith which in the latter part is assigned to eating Christ's flesh and drinking His blood. Again, the eating and drinking are described as in themselves effective; no condition that these acts must be done worthily is stated. Putting these facts together we are directed to the conclusion that the eating and drinking are figurative terms for a spiritual transaction, namely, the appropriation of Christ in the whole virtue of the truth and saving office which pertain to Him.

substance into another already existing substance. This is no better than saying that 1 + 1 = 1. To secure any approach to congruity of thought, it would be necessary to assume that the substance of the bread and wine is annihilated and replaced by the substance of Christ's body and blood. But the standard Romish definition, instead of making room for this conception, speaks of "conversion of substance." The natural inference is that its framers meant to affirm that one substance is actually turned into another already existing substance. This was plainly the view of Thomas Aquinas, who distinctly rejected the supposition of annihilation and replacement.[1]

3. The doctrine of transubstantiation involves an artificial and unphilosophical notion of the relation between substance and attribute. So far as any human test can discover, every attribute that belonged to the eucharistic bread and wine before consecration is retained after the formula of institution has been pronounced. The assumed change of substance leaves every attribute of which we have any knowledge intact. We are thus asked to believe that the relation between substance and attribute is much the same as that between a cushion and the pins which are stuck into it; the cushion is removed, and by a kind of divine magic the pins are kept in their old positions. This may answer for an untrained imagination. But in a tolerable metaphysical conception it must be seen that substance and attribute are inseparable; that, if a thing exists, it must exist in some special mode or modes; that these modes are what is meant by attributes[2]; and that, accordingly, to strip off the attributes and to leave

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[1] Sum. Theol. Pars iii. Quaest. lxxv. Art. 3.

[2] It may be observed here that a Roman Catholic scholar, in a recent volume, represents the definition of the scholastics as essentially coinciding with this statement, the terms employed by them in describing a quality or attribute being *modus essendi vel dispositio substantiae.* (Otto Willmann, Geschichte des Idealismus, 1896, II. 375.)

the substance, or to expel the substance and leave the attributes, is entirely out of the question. That in Romish nomenclature the term "accidents" is put in place of attributes does not help the matter. All the known attributes of bread and wine, including those as fundamentally associated with them in our thought as extension, weight, color, and nourishing power, come into the account; so that the advocate of transubstantiation must either grant that attributes proper are separable from substance, or that we have no knowledge of any attribute whatever. His theory, therefore, crowds him into the indefensible notion that there is no necessary connection between existence and modes of existence.

It may be noticed that, from other points of view, the Roman Catholic theory is seen to involve an arbitrary severance of substance and attribute. According to that theory, the bodily substance of an adult human being can be wholly contained within the limits of a particle no larger than a needle's point, and there be robbed of every sort of manifestation, so as to be absolutely beyond the reach of human perception. Now, to say that bodily substance can retain its integrity, or real nature, in spite of such suppression of all its known characteristics, is as much as saying that there is no necessary connection between substance and attribute. To add to the burden which is put upon rational thinking by the theory in question, it enforces the conclusion that a given set of attributes is not suppressed at the very time that it is suppressed — not suppressed, that is, as belonging to Christ's body in the heavenly sphere, where presumably it exhibits the human type in stature and contour, but suppressed in the same identical subject as contained in any portion of the eucharistic species. Imagine a piece of iron glowing at a white heat in one place, and at the same time covered with frost in another place, or absolutely void of any token of temperature or any other state or quality.

The current assertion of Roman Catholic theologians, that

the body of Christ is present in the eucharistic species after the manner of a spirit involves the same artificial relation between substance and attribute. If a body can take on the mode of subsistence of a spirit, why may not the reverse be true? Why may we not suppose spirits that are light or heavy, brown or white, conical, cubical, or cylindrical in shape? Then, too, it is not a little puzzling to define what can be meant by eating a body that subsists in the mode of a spirit.

4. Contradictory representations are involved by the Roman Catholic doctrine of transubstantiation as respects motion and multipresence. Since the whole substance of Christ's body is declared to be in each separate portion of consecrated bread, and these portions may be at the same time in all parts of the world, it follows that the same undivided physical substance may at the same instant be moving east and west, north and south, upwards and downwards; that, in fact, it may be travelling at once in all conceivable directions around the earth, or may be resting in its entirety within every square mile on the face of the earth, or even performing both of these feats at once. To take a historic instance, we are required to think that in the last supper, as celebrated by Christ with His disciples, the whole substance of his body may have been at the same time in His living frame, in His hand or mouth, and in the hand or mouth of each disciple. Now all this is not merely in defiance of the imagination, it is equally antagonistic to rational thinking. Whatever else a physical substance may be, it is certainly a definite quantum of physical force or energy. To assume, then, that a physical substance can move in its entirety in all conceivable directions, and be in its entirety in any number of distinct places, is just as good as saying that a definite quantum of physical force or energy can be increased ten thousand times, and yet remain the same.

5. The doctrine of transubstantiation cannot be reconciled with religious propriety in the act of communing. Only a

peculiarly educated sentimentality can regard that a proper dealing with the sacred body of Christ, which consigns it to mouth and stomach. First to worship and then literally to eat the Christ in the consecrated wafer is to join the highest tribute with the greatest indignity.

Some of the above objections to the Roman Catholic doctrine do not apply to the Lutheran theory of the presence of the body of Christ together with the substance of bread and wine, as these visible elements are received by the communicant; but others of them do apply. In general, theories of the real bodily presence, aside from the question of their rational conceivability, are amenable to these criticisms: —

1. They withdraw attention from the central meaning of the eucharistic rite as a memorial of Christ's death. The body which is supposed to be present can be only the glorified body. In proportion, therefore, as the thought is concentrated upon that, the historic intent of the rite fails of fulfillment, and it ceases to vitalize the sense of fellowship with the suffering and dying Redeemer.

2. These theories involve an unscriptural materialism. The whole trend of the New Testament directs to dependence upon the truth and Spirit of God for spiritual effects. There seems, then, to be no proper function left for the real body of Christ in the eucharistic elements. Spiritual effects are not appropriate to such an agent, that is, an invisible physical substance; and there is no warrant for supposing that the Lord's supper was meant to be a medium of corporeal benefits. To be sure, some theologians have imagined that Christ's glorified body, as proffered in the eucharistic elements, somehow works toward the bodily transfiguration which is consummated in the resurrection. But there is no proper warrant for this notion. The Scriptures ascribe the resurrection to the marvelous working of God's power, and in no wise teach that a mere lack of participation of the eucharistic elements will nullify the believer's prospect of attaining to a glorified body.

It is doubtless very easy for the advocates of the real bodily presence to charge upon their opponents, that they leave to the Lord's supper only empty symbols. But the elements, though symbolical, are not empty symbols. As was seen, they have a rich spiritual import. To view in them the most precious truths of the redemptive economy is to discover and to utilize a far better content than can be found in a physical presence for which no appropriate spiritual function can be specified.

There being no proper warrant for the real bodily presence, there can be of course no warrant for the idea of the eucharistic sacrifice as embodied in the Roman Catholic doctrine of the mass — a propitiatory sacrifice for the living and the dead. No victim is present to be offered upon the altar. Moreover, no foundation for the doctrine can be discovered in any words of Christ or the apostles, save by an exegetical absolutism akin to that which forces the dogma of papal infallibility into utterly irrelevant texts. The New Testament contemplates no other propitiatory sacrifice than that which was consummated on the cross, once for all.[1] It is true that a doctrine of sacrifice, approaching to the Roman Catholic, was well under way before the end of the fourth century. But it was as distinctly an innovation as was the contemporary saint-worship. The earlier fathers did not entertain it, though a few of them spoke in a free rhetorical way of the eucharistic elements as a thank-offering presented by the congregation. The following words of Irenæus are in point, and indicate how moderate a sacrificial import was attributed to the eucharist in the latter part of the second century: "Sacrifices do not sanctify a man, for God stands in no need of sacrifice; but it is the conscience of the offerer which sanctifies the sacrifice when it is pure, and thus moves God to accept it as from a friend. . . . Now we make an offering to

[1] Heb. ix. 24–28.

Him, not as though He stood in need of it, but rendering thanks for His gift, and thus sanctifying what has been created."[1] Not far from the time of Irenæus, Clement of Alexandria reproduced more nearly the proper conception of sacrifice within the compass of the new dispensation. "The sacrifice of the Church," he says, "is the word breathing as incense from holy souls. . . . The righteous soul is the truly sacred altar, and incense arising from it is holy prayer."[2]

Since baptism is the initiatory rite of Christian discipleship, there is obviously a certain propriety in making it in general the antecedent of the privilege to participate in the Lord's supper. But no one can prove that it is the will of Christ, that, always, irrespective of the demands of special circumstances, baptism must be insisted upon as a prerequisite to access to the Lord's table. It is not in the spirit of Christ to reckon rigid conformity to ecclesiastical propriety above the dictates of Christian cordiality. Much less, then, is it legitimate to insist upon a special form of baptism as a condition of participation in the eucharist.[3]

VIII. — The Alleged Sacrament of Penance.

Among the sacraments which the Roman Catholic Church affirms, in addition to baptism and the eucharist, that of penance has such a far-reaching significance that it appropriately comes under review in this connection.

The authorative teaching of that Church, as set forth in the decrees and canons of the Council of Trent, represents that forgiveness of sins, which are committed after baptism, is ob-

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[1] Cont. Haer. iv. 18. 3, 6. [2] Strom. vii. 6.

[3] John Wesley's exclusion of a pious man in Georgia from the Lord's table, on the ground of irregular baptism, belonged to the legal stage in his religious development, and was a piece of folly of which he afterwards heartily repented. (Journal, September, 1749).

tained through the sacrament of penance; that for the valid execution of this sacrament contrition, confession, and satisfaction are required of the penitent, and the act of absolution on the part of the priest; that even though contrition be perfect, it does not secure remission apart from at least a desire for the sacrament; and that the utterance by the priest of the absolving sentence is a judicial act. The last point is thus worded: "Although the absolution of the priest is the dispensation of another's bounty, yet it is not a bare ministry only, whether of announcing the gospel or of declaring that sins are forgiven, but is after the manner of a judicial act, whereby sentence is pronounced by the priest as by a judge."

Against this theory of *judicial absolution*, viewed as one of the necessary conditions of forgiveness, the following objections are to be urged:—

1. The doctrine authorizes what, from the conditions of the case, must ordinarily be an act of presumption. A positive declaration of forgiveness, where there is no knowledge whether forgiveness is possible, is surely an overstepping of the claims of truth and moderation. But knowledge of this kind is beyond the reach of the confessor. He has no natural means of knowing whether the penitent cherishes that contrition of heart, or at least attrition, without which, according to the Tridentine decisions, he cannot be absolved. To bring in supernatural means, to assume that a revelation is always given to the officiating priest, whether he be a saint or a besotted sinner, is to predicate the sheerest magic. Being thus without either natural or supernatural means to know certainly the state of the penitent's heart, what right has the priest to say: "*I absolve thee?*" If the absolving sentence had to do only with the ecclesiastical relation of the penitent, it might be allowed to pass. But in Romish theory it reaches higher than this, and is assumed to be actually an instrument of absolution in the sight of God. Herein lies the stain of presumption.

2. The doctrine of judicial absolution involves a notion of the divine forgiveness which is artificial and derogatory to the divine character. In any worthy view of God it must be seen that the priest is too late with his absolving sentence. The very same contrition which can properly entitle the penitent to the supposed benefit of that sentence, that is, one that answers to the scriptural idea of true repentance, invites the divine clemency. It is next to a sacrilege against the benevolence of God to suppose that He will wait for the intervention of ecclesiastical machinery before inwardly assuming a favorable attitude toward a sincere penitent. Such a conclusion puts the very nature of God under bondage to a creaturely formality transacted upon His footstool. But what more is divine forgiveness in its essence than this *favoring inward attitude?* Is there anything in the universe that can stand against this, or even unite with it, in determining the real status of a soul in relation to the divine kingdom? The notion that the priest can get ahead of the movement of the divine mind and heart cannot rationally be entertained for a moment.[1] It is indeed conceivable that in this or that instance the priest might be commissioned to declare to the penitent the already existing fact of his forgiveness, though the New Testament indicates as a matter of fact, that the Holy Spirit is ready to fulfill that office by awakening the filial consciousness and shedding abroad the love of God in the heart. This merely declaratory office, however, is just what Romish dogma repudiates. To provide for a judicial sentence it enthrones technicality over the ethical nature of God.

If it be assumed, as it is in the Tridentine decrees, that

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[1] "To say of any soul that is filled with sorrow for its sins that it can remain unforgiven, or that its forgiveness can be delayed for some other reason, is to utter what is really a contradiction in terms — a contradiction as great as to speak of the vanishing of darkness without the approach of light, or of the earth becoming nearer to the sun without the sun becoming nearer to the earth." (John Caird, University Sermons, p. 140.)

genuine contrition will always seek the absolving office of the priest, all that needs to be said is, that abundant facts utterly discredit the assumption. The real world gives the lie here to the speculations of the doctors.

3. The tenet respecting *judicial absolution* is discountenanced by the facts of ecclesiastical history. It may be granted that an overgrowth of sacerdotalism appeared in the Church, and that a mist began to spread over the proper distinction between reconciliation with the Church and reconciliation with God, at a comparatively early date. Still it was a long time before sacerdotalism reached that height of assumption which is expressed in the Tridentine doctrine of a necessary judicial absolution by the mouth of the priest. In proof of this it will suffice to quote these facts: (1) In the fourth century the office of penitential presbyter, established in the preceding century, was abolished in the East. The historians, Socrates and Sozomen, in recording this event use statements which plainly indicate that for the time there was a lapse as respects any requirement of confession, since the one writer says that "Everyone was left to his own conscience as regards participation in the sacred mysteries,"[1] and the other remarks, that people were no longer deterred from committing sins through dread of "exposing them to the scrutiny of a severe judge."[2] Now, this lapse in the practice of confession powerfully testifies to the truth that the motive of the practice could not have been an apprehended necessity of the priestly absolution as a condition of forgiveness before God. We are reminded here, as we are in other connections, that confession of private sins was primarily imposed for the twofold purpose of guarding the sacredness of the Christian mysteries and advising the penitent as to the proper satisfactions for his transgressions. (2) For many centuries absolution was administered, not in the form of a judicial sentence,

[1] Hist. Eccl. v. 19. [2] Hist. Eccl. vii. 16.

but in that of a supplication, expressed in words like these: "May the omnipotent God absolve thee, and spare thee, and remit and blot out all thy sins." [1] Roman Catholic scholars have acknowledged that up to the eleventh or twelfth century this was the current form of absolution.[2] (3) Peter Lombard in the twelfth century, in a work which served as a handbook of theology through the scholastic era, distinctly denies the judicial function of the priest. Referring to God's agency he says: "He himself alone through Himself remits sins, who also purifies the soul from interior stain and releases from the debt of eternal death. But He has not conceded this to the priests, to whom, nevertheless, He has assigned the power of loosing and binding — that is, of showing men bound or loosed." [3] His contemporary, Pullus, used equivalent words.[4] In the conception of both the office of the priest was evidently declaratory, much like that of the Jewish priest to whom the healed leper presented himself. A stronger view may, indeed, have been partly current at that time, but the fact that representative theologians still in the twelfth century denied the theory of judicial absolution combines with other historical evidence to show that this theory for a long time was no part of the accredited faith of the Church, and was enthroned finally only as the result of an extreme development of sacerdotal assumption.

4. The doctrine of judicial absolution has no proper warrant in the tenor of New Testament teaching. From one end of the New Testament to the other not a single case is on record in which an apostle or his delegate undertook to forgive sins in the sense of cancelling guilt in the sight of God, or to retain them in the sense of giving permanency to guilt.

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[1] H. J. Schmitz, Die Bussbücher und die Bussdisciplin der Kirche, pp. 757, 778.

[2] Amort, De Origine, Progressu, Valore, ac Fructu Indulgentiarum, Pars I. § 2, p. 3.

[3] Sent. IV. 18. 5, 6.

[4] Sent. VI. 16.

Paul, it is true, speaks of delivering over the Corinthian offender to Satan; but this, if not merely a rhetorical equivalent for expulsion from the Church, denotes the consignment of the transgressor to a special physical chastisement, a supernatural infliction upon the body in return for his grievous trespass. In either case no ground is afforded for imagining that the apostolic sentence determined the status of the culprit as condemned or forgiven in the sight of God. Nowhere does an apostle appear with a judicial sentence of absolution upon his lips. Nowhere is there any trace of a confessional in the New Testament; for, there is not the slightest need of concluding that the exhortation of James to a mutual confession of faults means the secret whispering of a penitent in the ear of a priest for the sake of getting his sentence of absolution. As was indicated in another connection, an interchange of brotherly sympathy and a motive to prayer in each other's behalf were the ends which James had in mind.

This absence of any trace of judicial absolution in the administration of the apostles suggests, at the least, that the passages in the Gospels which speak of an apostolic function of binding and loosing, or of remitting and retaining sins,[1] ought to be taken with those modifications which are dictated by a reasonable account of human limitations. As the apostles were not omniscient, and did not have the power to transform either the nature of man or of God, it was simply impossible for them to forgive sins in the eminent sense. Nor is there the slightest occasion to interpret the gospel passages in favor of such a faculty. Those passages, as is intimated by the context of Matt. xviii. 18, simply express, in striking form, the twofold fact that the apostles were endowed with full authority to administer government and discipline in the Church, and might expect in the fulfillment of this lofty function the special aid of the Holy Spirit. They

[1] Matt. xvi. 19, xviii. 18; John xx. 23.

were authorized to bind and to loose, to put on or to take off censures, to exclude or to receive, in connection with the visible Church; and, moreover, could cherish the high confidence, that, in virtue of the Holy Spirit's aid, what they should do in the visible sphere would be, in general, a reflex of that done in heaven, their exercise of indulgence or severity being made conformable to a divine discretion. To suppose the loosing or binding on earth by a human agent to precede or to condition that in heaven, the ecclesiastical to govern the essential, is to indulge in a beggarly anthropomorphism. The point of emphasis is the agreement of the two, and the special grace which should effect the agreement, or lift up the apostolic administration into conformity with the divine will. The apostolic act would be seconded or confirmed by God just because of its agreement with His foregoing judgment — that judgment that neither requires nor allows any temporal interval in its response to interior conditions.

The language addressed by Christ to His apostles sets forth an ideal. No men less near to the ideal in holiness, spiritual wisdom, and guidance of the Holy Spirit than were the apostles can come as near as they did to the fulfillment of those words — that is, as near to making what is done in the visible Church a reflex of that which is done in heaven.

The above exposition proceeds on the supposition that the words respecting binding and loosing, as also those on remitting and retaining, were addressed more directly and particularly to the apostles. If a broader application be given to them, they will of course be still less available for the support of a high sacerdotal theory. Now the context preceding and following Matt. xviii. 18 suggests that the power of binding and loosing therein mentioned was regarded as pertaining to the Christian brotherhood in general. Also in relation to John xx. 23, if we consult the parallel passage in Luke (xxiv. 33–36), we gain the impression that others than apostles were in the group to which the words on remitting and

retaining were addressed. In connection with either of the sentences under consideration, it remains to be proved that a prerogative of a set of officials, rather than the function of a brotherhood, was described.

5. In its practical effect the confessional, with its attachment of priestly absolution, tends to devitalize the sense of direct personal relation to God, and to put in its place a sense of dependence upon ecclesiastical mechanism. The pardon of sins is transferred, so to speak, from a divine to an earthly court-room. The penitent comes, under ecclesiastical requisition, before a human official, instead of being led by the feeling of his spiritual necessity to a direct transaction with the God of holiness and love. In proportion as he thinks on the virtue of uncovering his sin to the former, he is tempted to slight the demand to make earnest suit to the latter for pardon. He thus forfeits in greater or less measure the spiritual sensibility which comes from a near approach to God, and tends to the plane of a mechanical dealing with sin.

So decided is the tendency of the scheme of sacramental absolution toward this mechanical dealing with sin that it has virtually been sanctioned in Roman Catholic theory. Eminent writers of that Church have not hesitated soberly to advocate the astounding proposition that there is no such necessity for thorough-going penitence and love toward God under the new dispensation as existed under the old, inasmuch as the Christian sacrament comes in to make up the deficit. Distinguishing between contrition and the more superficial type of repentance known as attrition, they have maintained that the latter, plus the sacrament of penance, makes a man, in respect of his standing, as good as contrite.[1] This doctrine, it is true, has not been distinctly sanctioned by any ecumenical decree. But it has obtained large cur-

[1] Liguori, Theologia Moralis, Lib. VI. Tract. iv. n. 440–442; Laymann, Theol. Moral., Lib. V. Tract. vi. Cap. ii.; Sasse, Institutiones Theologicae de Sacramentis Ecclesiae, 1898, Vol. II. pp. 121–160.

rency, and the extraordinary honors which have been bestowed by recent popes upon such a pronounced advocate of it as Liguori amount to its virtual commendation by an authority that boasts of being above all correction.

It must be said, moreover, that the institution of the confessional, as it exists in Roman Catholicism, tends to a mixture of burdensome legality and unethical laxity. The former element provokes to the latter. The slavery of detailed confession, and of doing penance by rule, creates a motive to lighten the yoke by cutting down the estimate of various orders of offences, so as to exclude them from the rank of serious or mortal sins. Hence it has come about that a very considerable amount of perverse casuistry has found its way into Roman Catholic works of "moral theology," and maxims that are not fit to be exposed in the market-place have been sanctioned by authors who have commanded high esteem in the foremost circles of Romish orthodoxy.[1] This fact is not necessarily indicative of any corrupt disposition or intent; but it does constitute a striking comment on the entanglements of a system which imposes an exorbitant demand for weighing and measuring sins.

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[1] See the author's Church History, Modern Church, Part I. pp. 412–425, 490–500.

CHAPTER III.

THE COMPLETING STAGES IN THE PROGRESS OF THE CHURCH OR KINGDOM OF GOD.

I. — The Consummation of the Church Militant.

If we take the Church in its ideal sense, as substantially equivalent to the kingdom of God among men, it is evidently appropriate to discuss the themes of eschatology under the point of view of great eras or consummations awaiting the Church. For, while the perfecting of the individual conditions that of the community, it is still true that the goal toward which Christianity looks is not simply a great number of perfect men, but a great number of perfect men perfectly associated together, having a peculiar union with each other because of their oneness with Christ, a spiritual brotherhood, a holy and imperishable kingdom. To forecast, therefore, the movement toward the goal is to picture the great outlines in the destiny of the Church as well as the main crises in the perfecting of the individual.

It is the peculiarity of the New Testament forecast that it strongly tends to mount above the earthly horizon into a sphere of glorified existence. As was noticed in the consideration of the subject of immortality,[1] the national and preliminary character of the Jewish religion naturally dictated that it should deal somewhat scantily with the supra-mundane unfoldment of the divine kingdom. Both the Old Testament

[1] Part III. Chapter II. Section III.

and the New are intensely prophetical; both show the impress of a divinely enkindled optimism; the great difference is that in the latter the light is upon a loftier horizon, illuminating a scene which is distinctly characterized as belonging to the region of incorruptibility and immortality.

Transcendent as is the prospect held forth, it is still well approved to Christian faith. As Dorner has remarked, "A pregnant eschatological element lies in Christian faith, as such. Faith has experienced so much of Christ's effectual working, that in presence of what is still lacking, however much this may be, it possesses not merely the hope, but the certainty, that the divine idea of the world will not remain simply a fair but impotent picture of imagination."[1]

While the prophetic glance of the New Testament hastens towards the scenes of the heavenly life, it does not slight altogether the future of the Church in this world. Various sentences in the discourses of Christ and the messages of the apostles touch upon this theme. These may be classified as foreshadowing on the one hand progress and triumph, and on the other trial and conflict.

In the former line of passages we have, first, the declaration that the "Gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in the whole world for a testimony unto all the nations."[2] The natural sense of these words is not merely that a few individuals in the different nations shall have a fugitive opportunity to gain a superficial notion about the gracious purpose of God in Christ, but rather that the nations, the great bodies of men in the world, shall have something like a real chance to hear the gospel and to respond to its message. The universal preaching was designed to prepare for the consummation of the age. It is evident, however, that this design could be fulfilled only by a preaching which should penetrate in some good measure to the understanding of men. The words in question,

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[1] System of Christian Doctrine, § 151. [2] Matt. xxiv. 14; Mark xiii. 10.

therefore, have the force of a prophecy of a great missionary progress of Christianity. Whatever measure those addressed may have applied to them, it is difficult to think that the Master put into them any smaller meaning than this.

A second intimation on the side of progress and victory is contained in Paul's declared confidence, that under the marvellous providence of God the ingathering of the Gentiles would be followed by a general conversion of the Jews. Speaking of his unbelieving nation he says: "If the casting away of them is the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be but life from the dead? . . . I would not have you, brethren, ignorant of this mystery, that a hardening in part hath befallen Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in; and so all Israel shall be saved."[1] This, as being in the intense dialect of prophetical optimism, is not to be taken too precisely; but it certainly indicates the faith of the apostle that in course of time the Jewish people would very generally accept the gospel message.

It is to be noticed that Paul says nothing about a temporal restoration of the Jews. In his view all who possess the Christian faith are the true seed of Abraham. His emphatic repudiation of national barriers, and other artificial distinctions among Christians,[2] makes it utterly improbable that he looked for any such special mission of the Jews as those figure who suppose that they are to be restored to their own land, and to be honored with a sort of primacy in the work of evangelizing the world. The main resort of the interpreters who are enamored of this theory must be Old Testament prophecy. But they gain here a very unsubstantial foundation for their conclusion. From the theocratic point of view of the prophets, the Jewish people was the centre and heart of the kingdom of God upon earth. In their anticipations for that kingdom, therefore, they naturally pictured the fortunes of this people,

[1] Rom. xi. 15, 25, 26. [2] Gal. iii. 26–29.

coloring the scene according to their special environment and outlook. In the face of a Christian environment essentially the same hopes and expectations would prompt to a different order of expressions. A glorious fulfillment of the old prophecies — a union of fulfillment and transcendence — is found in the great facts that the Jewish people returned from the Babylonish captivity, furnished the household in which Christianity was born, as also the first agents by whom it was carried abroad in the world, and thus became a light to the Gentiles, an instrument of blessing on a vast scale to the human race. It is indeed possible that the force of historic associations may combine with special circumstances to effect a partial restoration of the Jews to Palestine. But it would still be entirely problematical whether this would promote rather than hinder the spiritual conquest of the world by Christianity. Those who desert a New Testament outlook for that of an outgrown dispensation are in a poor way to have their anticipations fulfilled.

Another intimation of substantial victory awaiting the Church is contained in the passage of the Apocalypse which represents Satan as bound for a thousand years, and describes the joint reign of martyred saints and faithful witnesses with Christ in these terms: "And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that had been beheaded for the testimony of Jesus, and for the word of God, and such as worshipped not the beast, neither his image, and received not the mark upon their forehead and upon their hand; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. The rest of the dead lived not until the thousand years should be finished. This is the first resurrection: over these the second death hath no power; but they shall be priests of God and of Christ and shall reign with Him a thousand years."[1]

[1] Rev. xx. 4–6.

If one were to come to this passage, without prejudice either for or against the doctrine of the visible coming and reign of Christ, for a period prior to what the context pictures as the general resurrection, he would gather from it, we think, the following points: (1) The Revelator conceived that the Church, or the general body of believers, is to enjoy a period of relative security and ascendency in this world. This is symbolized by the binding of Satan for a thousand years — a figurative equivalent for the declaration that violent expressions of an anti-christian spirit shall be put in abeyance for a considerable term. (2) The Revelator conceived that at the beginning of this term certain classes of elect souls will be the subjects of a special resurrection, thus preceding the great mass of the dead, who are not to be raised till the end of the thousand years. That the first resurrection, of which the elect souls are the subjects, was intended to denote an investment with bodies appropriate to the eternal state, is implied by the fact that it is described as an anticipation of the general resurrection, which in the concluding part of the chapter is associated with the final judgment, and which, in early Christian thought, undoubtedly included a renewal of embodied life. Certainly it would make an ill-jointed combination to assert that the great majority of the dead are to be raised a thousand years after the resurrection of a special company has been consummated, if, in one instance, it is supposed that a literal resurrection was meant, and in the other something entirely different. (3) It is open to question whether the Revelator conceived that the reign of Christ, together with the subjects of the first resurrection, was to be a visible reign upon the earth. Not a word is said in the passage which unequivocally points to a visible manifestation upon an earthly theatre. It is true that in the verses which describe the events that immediately follow upon the millennial reign there is a reference to the camp of the saints, and to the beloved city, as being compassed about by the enemy; but all this is naturally

understood of believers who are still in the flesh, and so gives no earthly habitation either to Christ or to those who had come to share specially in His glory as subjects of the first resurrection. There being thus nothing in the description which positively requires the assumption of a visible earthly reign, that assumption is subject to the full force of all the objections which stand against it. In the first place it has to encounter the fact of contrariety to the general representation of the New Testament, wherein the coming of Christ is described as the immediate antecedent of the great crisis which is to usher in the eternal kingdom.[1] Then again it has to encounter the import of Christ's teaching, that His work would be better furthered by His presence in heaven than by visible association with His disciples upon earth, and that the energy of the Holy Spirit and the word of testimony are to be the means of spiritual conquest. These grounds of objection, it is true, will not appear inconsistent with interpreting the passage under consideration in the literal millenarian sense, in case one is pleased to regard its author as going counter to the trend of New Testament teaching. But this supposition of course cancels the dogmatic value of the passage. The possible, or even probable, sense of a verse or two makes no suitable dogmatic basis in face of a contrary tenor in prominent lines of New Testament representation. Authority must, therefore, be declared to be decidedly wanting for the millenarian doctrine of a visible earthly reign, whatever interpretation be put upon the Revelator's language. As is remarked in a recent treatise on eschatology: "In all other writers of the New Testament this doctrine is not only ignored, but its acceptance is made impossible in their definite doctrinal systems of the last things, for in these the second advent and the last judgment synchronize. Thus the millennium, or the reign of Christ for one thousand years on the present earth,

[1] Matt. xxiv. 29–31, xxv. 31–33; 1 Thess. iv. 16–18; 1 Cor. xv. 23, 24.

or any other form of the temporary Messianic kingdom, cannot be said to belong to the sphere of Christian doctrine." [1]

The second order of prophetic intimations on the future of the Church militant, though obscure in some parts, has a very certain impress as regards the fact of impending tribulations and conflicts. The anti-christian power which was to be the source of the trial is in some instances described in language which implies that it was viewed as secular; in other instances it is referred to in terms which denote that it was regarded as spiritual or ecclesiastical, its special exponents being characterized as pretended Messiahs, false prophets, and fomenters of heresy and schism. Both aspects appear in the forecast which Christ gave of the fortunes awaiting His followers.[2] Note is also taken of both in the Johannine writings.[3] Paul seems to have dwelt mainly upon the danger and difficulty which would assail the Church through a corrupt power invading spiritual society and overclouding the simplicity of the gospel with its swollen pretensions and erroneous teachings.[4]

As regards the persecuting secular power more immediately contemplated, it is quite evident that this was the empire of heathen Rome, which as a matter of fact subjected Christianity to a fearful ordeal. It is possible indeed, that the prophetic glance of the New Testament over the theatre of this world reached somewhat beyond the limits of that empire. This seems to have been the case in the reference of the Apocalypse to Gog and Magog.[5] But heathen Rome stood in the

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[1] R. H. Charles, A Critical History of the Doctrine of a Future Life in Israel, in Judaism, and in Christianity, p. 350.

[2] Matt. xxiv.; Mark xiii.; Luke xxi.

[3] Rev. xii., xiii., xvi. 13, 14, xvii., xix. 19, xx. 7–9; 1 John ii. 18; 2 John 7.

[4] 2 Thess. ii. 3–12: 1 Tim. iv. 1–3; 2 Tim. iv. 3, 4. Compare 2 Pet. ii. 1–3. The interpretation of the Thessalonian passage cannot yet be regarded as a fully solved problem. Among those whose general conception of the apostle's meaning accords with that presented here are W. Bousset, B. Weiss, and G. B. Stevens.

[5] Rev. xx. 8.

foreground of prophetic vision, and a sober exegesis will be slow to detect any references to a more remote secular power, at least any direct references. An indirect reference, in the sense that a leading type describes in a general way all akin to itself, may readily be admitted.

A similar line of remark applies to the anti-christian working of a spiritual or ecclesiastical order which was foreshadowed by Christ and the apostles, and which may be regarded as having its theatre both in Judaism and in Christianity. As John testifies, this began within the limits of the apostolic era.[1] Paul, when he wrote his second epistle to the Thessalonians, was expecting a climax of apostasy, ungodly assumption, and opposition to the truth, such as had not come to manifestation in his time. His description has been variously interpreted as finding its fulfillment in Mohammed, in the pope, or in the Reformers who broke away from papal authority. But all such interpretations, besides being overmuch suggestive of controversial animus, lead too far away from Paul's field of vision, and put a definiteness of meaning into his words which probably they did not have for his own mind. It is better to regard the passage as giving, in terms which had been more or less current since the Maccabean age, the essential features which are quite certain to belong to a specially pronounced and powerful embodiment of the anti-christian spirit. Paul had no clear view as to the precise time when such an embodiment might be expected. It may be judged, however, that he apprehended that the time was not distant. Exegetes very commonly believe that they can detect in his language evidence of an expectation that the predicted inroad of apostasy and ungodly presumption would occur on the theatre of the Roman empire.

The student of the New Testament can hardly fail to

[1] 1 John ii. 18.

observe that very largely in its forecast of the fortunes of the Church militant time measures are not closely regarded. As is the case with the larger part of prophecy, the stress falls rather upon the logical sequence, the movement toward the providential goal, than upon the temporal intervals. The apostles were well assured of the goal, and of the general tenor of the antecedents through which it must be reached. As respects the times of fulfillment they had no definite foresight, and could only cherish the general attitude of expectancy which earnest longing for the great consummation naturally begets, and which it seems to have been the will of Christ that His followers should cherish, as an incitement to fidelity and hope, till the day of His appearing. Most of the apostolic references indicate an apprehension that the Christian age would run a speedy course. We learn, however, that ere long account began to be taken in Christian circles of the principle that a day with the Lord is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.[1]

In the condensed narrative, which is given in the Gospels, of Christ's discourse on the destruction of Jerusalem and the closing of the dispensation, it may seem to be implied that these events were to occur in close conjunction, and both alike were to fall within the limits of the generation then living. But it is not improbable that in the fragmentary report of the discourse its original perspective has been somewhat marred. The same Christ who foresaw truly the speedy destruction of Jerusalem, who emphasized the method of gradual unfoldment as characteristic of the kingdom,[2] and who taught unmistakably, in the parables of the vineyard and the marriage supper of the king's son, that, after the day of vengeance had come upon the Jews, the great spiritual trust which they had borne in the world should pass over to the Gentiles,[3] cannot consistently be regarded as placing the con-

[1] 2 Pet. iii. 8. [2] Matt. xiii. 31–33; Mark iv. 26–32.
[3] Matt. xxi. 33–46; Mark xii. 1–12; Luke xx. 9–18; Matt. xxii. 1–7.

summation of earthly history so close to the fall of the fated city. Supposing that in His discourse the destruction of Jerusalem was taken as typical or suggestive of the end of the world, and that He passed rather abruptly from the one to the other, we can easily conceive how in the report of His words a closer temporal connection may have been given to the two events than belonged to them in His thought.

It may perhaps be suggested that interpretation will be facilitated by predicating only one event in this connection, rather than two, and identifying that one event with the coming of Christ in the visitation of judgment upon Jerusalem. In response to this suggestion it is to be granted, inasmuch as Christ deemed it appropriate to assume a very intimate connection between the kingdom of God and His own person, that He could consistently identify a triumph of the kingdom with His own triumph, and in figurative language describe it as a coming of the Son of Man, a manifestation and demonstration of His victorious life and activity beyond His apparent defeat through death. A spiritual outburst like that of Pentecost, or a great judgment like that which sealed the fate of Jerusalem, as it marked a signal era in the progress of the kingdom, showed forth Christ as the living head of the kingdom, and could be accounted, in a sense, His coming or self-manifestation. Certain sentences in the Gospels are perhaps most fittingly construed when their reference to Christ's coming is taken in this sense.[1] Some recent exegetes are of the opinion that the same principle of interpretation can be applied to the whole content of the eschatological discourse in Matt. xxiv. and Mark xiii. The outlook in these chapters, they claim, does not reach beyond the fall of Jerusalem, so that there is no occasion to assume any disparity between Christ's meaning and the report of the evangelists. But this way of eliminating stones of stumbling

[1] Matt. x. 23, xvi. 28; Mark ix. 1; Luke ix. 27.

is not well adapted to give entire satisfaction. It is difficult, for one thing, to suppose that Christ's declaration of ignorance respecting the "day and the hour" had reference to an event which was described as certain to occur within the existing generation. Prophecy was coming to close quarters in assuming to fix even the generation within which a great crisis should occur. Such exactness and precision as the actual naming of the day and the hour seem to have been too remote from the circle of reasonable requirement to elicit naturally any mention. A superior congruity is therefore gained for Christ's solemn asseveration of the impossibility of giving a temporal location to the coming event, if this asseveration is regarded as applying to a greater and remoter crisis than the impending fall of Jerusalem, the phrase "day and hour" being used only as a more vivid expression for the unknown future time. Moreover, it is to be reckoned improbable that some of the reported words of Christ, notably those in Matt. xxiv. 29–31 and Mark xiii. 24–27, should have been meant to picture anything less than the end of the dispensation. Especially improbable is it that those who penned the words gave to them a significance falling short of this. The Gospels show that the primitive disciples were slow of heart to understand the kingdom on the side of its spiritual significance. Other parts of the New Testament, as well as the Gospels, evince that the apocalyptic conception of Christ's second coming was prominent in the minds of the disciples in the early days of Christianity. Consequently it looks like a doubtful refinement upon the probable position of the gospel writers to exclude that conception from the basis of the reports contained in the passages under review.[1] On the whole, we consider that we choose the path of least difficulty and greatest probability when we conclude that

[1] Compare J. A. Beet, The Last Things, third edition, p. 50; G. B. Stevens, Theology of the New Testament, pp. 158–162.

the reports of the evangelists in this connection do not fully reproduce the order and perspective of the original discourse.

II. — The Life After Death in its more Immediate Conditions.

In the dramatic representation which the New Testament gives of the future, the second coming of Christ and the resurrection follow upon the scene which mirrors the fortunes of the Church militant. Very scanty consideration is accorded to the state of the dead in the interval preceding these events. In explanation of this fact two prominent reasons may be urged. On the one hand, the absence of any definite time measure of the interval between the ascension of Christ and His return, as it left the apostles free to think of that interval as very brief, naturally limited the occasion and the disposition to make much account of the experiences which might be included therein. On the other hand, a practical spirit could not be indifferent to the truth that the issues of eternity vastly outweigh those of any portion of time, and that consequently the question of paramount importance is not, what does earthly conduct prepare for a man in any limited portion of the hereafter? but rather, how does it affect his eternal destiny? In giving supremacy to the practical point of view the New Testament could not do otherwise than emphasize the seriousness of the life in this world by associating it closely with the immeasurable interests of eternity.

The latter of these two reasons abides in undiminished force. The practical man will ever regard the result of conduct and character upon the final destiny as the matter of foremost personal concern. But it is obviously different as respects the former reason. As century is added to century, and the number of those in the region of the dead becomes many times greater than that of the living upon the earth, their life

in that region for a prolonged age, however subordinate its import may be to that of the eternal state, acquires undoubtedly very large significance. The conscious life of innumerable millions of beings for an extended period cannot be reckoned a matter of small account.

We say *conscious life*, for the doctrine of the sleep of the dead prior to the resurrection violates the clear tenor of the biblical teaching. Not to mention the pregnant declaration of Christ that God is the God of the living and not of the dead, the continuance of conscious existence is implied in the parable of the rich man and Lazarus, in the appearance of Moses and Elijah upon the mount of transfiguration, in the assurance to the dying thief that he should enter paradise on the day of the crucifixion, in the prayer of the martyred Stephen that the Lord would receive his spirit, in the expectation of Paul that departure from this life would make him present with Christ, in the representation of Peter respecting Christ's preaching to the spirits in prison, and in John's vision of the souls of those who had been slain for their confession of Christ, and who appear to have been still waiting for the resurrection.[1] Since no natural interpretation can be given to these texts on the supposition of non-existence or unconsciousness after death, they greatly outweigh such sentences as speak of death as an entrance into silence and inaction;[2] for such can easily be explained as rhetorical descriptions of disappearance from the scene of visible activity, a gliding away from the bustling life of earthly communities.

The fact of conscious existence in the period immediately subsequent to death signifies necessarily that this is a period of at least partial awards. Proper consciousness precludes a neutral state. Moreover, the New Testament references

[1] Matt. xxii. 32; Luke xvi. 19–31; Mark ix. 4; Luke xxiii. 43; Acts vii. 59; 2 Cor. v. 8; Phil. i. 21–23; 1 Pet. iii. 19; Rev. vi. 9–11. See also 1 Thess. v. 10; 2 Pet. ii. 9.

[2] Ps. vi. 5, cxv. 17; Dan. xii. 2; 1 Cor. xv. 51; 1 Thess. iv. 14, v. 10.

which imply consciousness indicate for the most part a positive realization either of felicity or of pain. At the same time, the association which is given to the resurrection and the judgment, with the bestowment of reward and retribution, is certainly fitted to convey the impression that neither reward nor retribution is rendered in full measure immediately after death.

Beyond these specifications little can be said, on the basis of any distinct authority, respecting the initial stage of existence beyond this life, or the intermediate state as it is commonly designated. The definiteness which the subject has attained in the Roman Catholic system is due to the transference of a cluster of mediæval fancies into the sphere of doctrine. To those who reject the infallibility of the Church, the traditional Roman Catholic teaching about purgatory, and the assumed prerogative of the pope to hasten the progress of souls through its tortures by the grant of indulgences, will not appear to have any proper warrant in the canonical Scriptures.[1] The assumption on which this teaching is founded, namely, that when sin is forgiven a part of the penalty still remains, and must be discharged by some form of penance or be covered by an ecclesiastical grant, as has already been indicated, is decidedly anti-Pauline; and it may be added that it is no less contradictory of the attitude toward repentant sinners which the language of Christ ascribes to the heavenly Father. As for the pope's alleged jurisdiction over the intermediate realm, it runs into the height of absurdity to suppose that an earthly sinner, who needs to look well to his own salvation, has been intrusted with any oversight or responsibility in relation to that measureless world of spirits. For this preposterous assumption a very poor compensation is offered by distinguishing a few among the dead as patrons of believers

[1] Bellarmin cites for the doctrine of purgatory, Matt. v. 22, 25, 26; Luke xii. 58, 59, xvi. 9, xxiii. 42; Acts ii. 24; 1 Cor. iii. 15, xv. 29; Phil. ii. 10; 2 Maccabees xii.

upon earth, and predicating a radical dependence of the latter upon the former, which dependence is to be expressed in prayers and acts of homage. If the one item makes the dead absurdly dependent upon an earthly official, the other assumes for the living an exaggerated dependence upon the dead, and shadows the privilege of more direct access to God through the one perfect mediator, Christ Jesus. That the departed remember the living, and blend with their ascriptions to God acceptable prayers for those upon the field of earthly conflict, may be true; but it by no means follows, because prayers of saints to God have worth, that, therefore, prayers to saints can fulfill any useful office.

A speculation respecting the intermediate state, which has been favored by a number of Protestant theologians, deserves a passing notice. As phrased by Martensen, it runs thus: "In comparison with the present state it must be said of the departed, that they are in a condition of rest, a condition of passivity, that they are in the night in which no man can work. Their realm is not a realm of deeds and works, for the outward conditions under which deeds and works can be accomplished are not present. Nevertheless they live a deep spiritual life; for the realm of the dead is the realm of inwardness, the realm of the still deep reflection upon self, a realm of recollection in the full sense of the word, in the sense that the soul enters here into its own interior, retreats to that which is the ground of its life, the true interior of all being."[1] An element of truth may belong to this representation, but there is no certain means of determining how far it gives a true picture of the state and experience of souls. On the one hand, the stress which is laid in the Scriptures upon the resurrection may be regarded as implying that the embodied existence is necessary to the highest personal and community life; on the other hand, however, an energetic activity is ascribed

[1] Dogmatik, § 276.

to angels, and the Scriptures fail to give us positive assurance that they do not fall under the category of purely spiritual beings.

A question of larger import than the one just considered is that which relates to the experience of progressive sanctification and to the possibility of distinct moral transitions in the intermediate state.

The argument for the negative side is comprised in these facts: (1) Throughout the New Testament men are addressed as if the present were the time of decision, and destiny depended upon the use made of its opportunities.[1] (2) Judgment is represented to be based on conduct in this life.[2] (3) To a very large extent Christian conviction through the centuries has been in favor of the conclusion that the essential lot of all men is fixed this side the border of the other world.

The principal considerations which may be urged in favor of the supposition that progressive sanctification and distinct moral transitions may have place in the intermediate state are the following:—

1. So great is the tendency of conduct to fashion and to fix character, that in any practical address the present must be emphasized as the time of decision upon coming destiny. The New Testament as a practical book, addressing those to whom the gospel message has come, and who have understandings sufficiently matured to respond to the message, would naturally put the whole stress upon present opportunity, even if for some human beings differently circumstanced it should be the purpose of God to provide means of spiritual education and improvement in the interim between death and the close of the dispensation. Moreover, the lack of any definite time

[1] Matt. v. 29, 30, xviii. 8, 9, xxiv. 42, 44; Mark ix. 42–48, xiii. 33–37; Luke xiii. 23–30, xvi. 27–31; John iii. 36, ix. 4; Heb. ii. 1–3.

[2] Matt. xxv. 41–45; 2 Cor. v. 10; 1 Thess. i. 5–10; Heb. ix. 27; Rev. xxii. 11, 12.

measure in the New Testament for the intermediate state, and the apostolic anticipation of the speedy coming of Christ, served to decrease to some extent the occasion for regarding aught but the earthly theatre of opportunity.

2. Peter's reference to the preaching of Christ, apparently in the interval between His death and resurrection, though somewhat obscure and enigmatic, is most naturally interpreted as implying a presentation of the gospel message to some portion of the dead.[1] Of the effect of this preaching, it is true, no record is given.

3. Great multitudes of men who may be regarded as possessing the root of Christian character do not appear to have been completely sanctified before death. Therefore, since death cannot be regarded as transforming man's spiritual nature, the reason of the case seems to dictate that the completion of sanctification must be effected by a process covering a greater or less interval. At least, no rational warrant can be found for the supposition that multitudes, whom the providence and grace of God fail to bring to entire holiness during the years of earthly life, encounter means of complete spiritual transformation the moment they pass out of this life.

4. A considerable fraction of the race dies before the dawn of moral experience. Another fraction dies after such a scanty experience that character cannot be regarded as having been given a decisive bent either toward good or evil by personal conduct. This applies both to the young and to those of maturer years who have had very inferior opportunities for religious knowledge and training. Now, it will not be denied that each one in all this immense aggregate of human beings, if located for a sufficient interval on the theatre of earthly opportunity, would need to make a distinct personal decision in order to become a proper subject of Christ's kingdom, and

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[1] 1 Pet. iii. 18–20, iv. 6. See Part IV. Chapter II. Section I.

would be so free in that decision that the issue would be truly contingent. A real or contingent choice would lie before everyone of them in this world. What determines that it should not be their prerogative, or unavoidable experience, in the intermediate state? If it be said that the power of God perfects their spiritual natures on the instant, then a sweeping application is given to the doctrine of irresistible grace, and the inference is justified that for a large fraction of the race the fact of death is equivalent to predestination unto eternal life. If, on the other hand, it is supposed that the grace necessary, in conjunction with a possible use of freedom, for perfecting any of those in the classes under consideration is withheld by God, then the genuineness of His wish that they should be saved is impeached, and place is given to a conception which is essentially that of unconditional reprobation.

5. The advocate of freedom in the Arminian sense needs to remind himself of two things in this connection. First, he needs to note that a negative condition of salvation, such as is the mere willingness of God to save, guarantees the salvation of no one, and in no wise displaces the demand for a personal choice, which, in the case of immature and untried moral agents, whose character has not been precipitated by acting under any clear light of truth, must be regarded as containing an element of contingency. Secondly, he should observe that it has an appearance of inconsistency to repudiate Augustinian or Calvinistic postulates for this life while giving them a vast application to the life beyond the grave. The statement that God could not have kept Adam from falling, without violence to his moral constitution, harmonizes ill with the supposition that He can cancel on the instant all contingency in the spiritual estate of millions of souls who are quite as immature as was Adam when he came from the Creator's hand, not to speak of the millions whose condition approximates to this description. Beyond all dispute, it makes a noticeable disjunction in thought to regard men as autonomous personalities

in this world, and then to relegate them without distinction, just across the border of this world, to the character of goods which determine nothing as to where they shall be stored.

That the difficulty noted is not met by quoting the oft-repeated and indubitable maxim about men being judged according to the light enjoyed is perfectly obvious. The question concerns not merely a standard of judgment, but a method of bringing into the positive possession of holy character. The fact that a man is not irremediably condemned in consideration of the very slight advantages falling to his lot, involves no denial that it is necessary to reckon him still a subject for an educative and perfecting process, and that his will is not so entirely a certain factor in this process as to leave no shade of doubt about the outcome.

A theory which assumes that Arminianism holds good for two worlds, and not for one only, which makes moral strenuousness anywhere and everywhere a condition of established citizenship in the divine kingdom, and which gives no promise to those who harden their hearts against the ample message of grace in the present, to whatever charge it may be exposed, cannot be accused of laxity. It is a stringent theory. Doubtless it can be given an abusive application; and so may the opposing theory. The one is as well-guarded in this respect as the other. To extend the time-limit for specially conditioned souls affords naturally no greater occasion for unwarrantable expectations than does a lowering of the standard of requirement for ultimate salvation. That a strong motive to lower the standard operates, in connection with the theory of a total exclusion of moral transitions from the sphere of the future life, will not be denied by one who makes a careful survey of the religious world.

Our consciousness of the superficiality and unfairness, with which the considerations which make for the possibility of moral transitions in the intermediate state have often been treated, has inclined us to give to this side of the subject the

larger space. It would quite mistake our meaning, however, to suppose that we account this point of view of any great practical significance. The appropriate course for the Christian worker is open to no rational doubt, whether we consult the testimony of reason, of experience, or of revelation. Penetrated with the conviction that the remedial system of the gospel ought to be brought to bear upon every human life at the earliest possible point, in order that the stifling effect of sinful indulgence upon the spiritual sensibilities may be forestalled, he ought to urge divine invitations and warnings with as much earnestness as would naturally inspire his address if he should see in the decisions of the hour foreshadowings of eternal destinies. New Testament preaching must in all reason be regarded as model preaching. The office of preaching is not to project theories about those who do not have opportunities in this world, but rather to bring to men who do have opportunities a vital sense of the greatness of offered privilege and the seriousness of unavoidable responsibility.

III. — The Second Advent and the Resurrection.

The references of the New Testament to the geography of the other world need in large part to be construed as figurative or accommodated expressions. There is, therefore, very little occasion to speak of an *intermediate place.* But it is not altogether feasible to dispense with a reference to an *intermediate state.* This phrase has insinuated itself into the preceding discussion. That some measure of propriety belongs to its use must be admitted by one who supposes a time element to enter into the moral cleansing and perfecting of souls beyond the borders of this life. The period of the process of perfecting would have from this point of view more or less of the character of an intermediate state. Something

may also be conceded to the thought, that for the complete realization of the heavenly estate the perfecting of the whole body of the redeemed is the necessary antecedent, so that any measure of fruition preceding this supreme consummation must have in some degree the character of a preliminary or intermediate stage.

If the second coming of Christ, with its accompaniment of the resurrection from the dead, is to be associated with a distinct era, then evidently a very intelligible ground for affirming an intermediate state is presented, since the embodied life, conceived to be introduced by the resurrection, must in some respects be distinguished from the condition preceding. Now, to assume a distinct era for the advent and the related events is to follow the natural sense of numerous texts.[1] Even a writer so much disposed as was John to transport into a present application the terms descriptive of future realities — such as resurrection, judgment, and eternal life — has given indications that he entertained the idea of a distinct era for the advent and the resurrection.[2] An apparent exception to this way of thinking on the part of Paul, as will be shown presently, is not so certainly shut up to one interpretation as to count for very much in an exposition of the apostolic standpoint.

To rule out, therefore, the conception of an extraordinary epoch of manifestation and consummation, we should need to take many New Testament texts much as we do the Old Testament references to Sheol, that is, as rather an incidental employment of the framework of current eschatological thinking than as having specifically the force of revelation. On rational grounds it is doubtless possible to say somewhat in justification of the supposition that the investment with the new body occurs immediately after death. Still, it strikes

[1] Matt. xxiv. 30, xxv. 31; Mark xiii. 26; Luke xxi. 27; Acts i. 11; 1 Thess. iv. 16; 2 Thess. i. 7, 10; Heb. ix. 28; Rev. i. 7.

[2] John v. 28, 29, vi. 39, 40, 44, 54, xi. 24, xii. 48, xiv. 3, xxi. 22; 1 John ii. 28.

us that it is somewhat venturesome, in consideration of our ignorance, to so far abridge the natural import of the New Testament language as to shut out or ignore the idea of a special era.

Not a few interpreters have thought it necessary to emphasize the idea that the second advent is to be a visible coming, and have spoken as though it must be within the field of the natural vision of the dwellers upon the face of the earth. But this is pushing pictorial representation into a needless excess of literalism. The point of emphasis in the New Testament predictions is the certainty of the personal manifestation of Christ to His disciples and to the race generally. All are to apprehend His presence, and to know that the one revealed in glory and might is the same as He who was born of Mary and suffered under Pontius Pilate. Even the most detailed of the descriptions, such as that of Paul to the Thessalonians,[1] are not required to be taken as meaning anything more than this. It is to be noticed that the apostle here does not so much as say that Christ is to set foot upon the earth. He is to descend, indeed; but His disciples are to be caught up in the clouds to meet Him in the air — a rhetorical expression which probably was not designed to be exact any more than are our words when we speak of the translation of men into the skies. The whole description, when stripped of its imaginative coloring, reduces to the truth of the certain manifestation of Christ and the certain welcome by Him of all His followers into the heavenly kingdom. Of course it is very appropriate to assist our apprehension of the second advent by imaginative picturings; but it shows poor discretion to attempt to secure for the domain of dogmatic teaching that which belongs to the sphere of religious imagination.

On the subject of the resurrection we have also some forms

[1] 1 Thess. iv. 16–18.

of expression which belong not so much to exact doctrinal discourse as to the pictorial art of the religious imagination. The dogmatic trend of the scriptural representations is comprised mainly in these particulars: (1) Souls in the ultimate stage of man's existence are to be invested with bodies; (2) these bodies are to be so far different from those of the present as to be suitable to the heavenly and incorruptible life; (3) the resurrection, or investment with bodies, is to take place generally at the era of the second advent; (4) nature, in some part at least, is to undergo a renewing or transfiguration analogous to that wrought in man's corporeal being. Of these items the third and the fourth, though clearly enough suggested by the language of the apostolic writings, do not need to receive the same emphasis as the two preceding.

That the resurrection has a reference to the body is not only implied by the general cast of the texts in which it is mentioned,[1] but is unequivocally taught in the most detailed exposition of the theme which is contained in the New Testament.[2] It is true that the word "resurrection" is used occasionally in a spiritual sense;[3] but this is on account of the aptness of the physical transformation to figure that which is wrought in the spiritual nature. Only an arbitrary exegesis can reduce the scriptural teaching to a mere assertion either of spiritual transformation or of the immortality of the soul.

As certainly as the New Testament teaches a bodily resurrection, it distinguishes between the qualities of the future body and that of the present. Christ's exclusion of the marriage relation, and comparison of the state of risen saints to that of angels in heaven, involve such a distinction. Paul more directly and explicitly affirms the distinction in these sentences: "Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. . . . It is

[1] John v. 28, 29, vi. 44; Acts xxiv. 15; 1 Thess. iv. 14–16; Rev. xx. 13.
[2] 1 Cor. xv. Compare Phil. iii. 21.
[3] Rom. vi. 4, 5; Eph. v. 14; Col. ii. 12, 13.

sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption: it is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power: it is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body."[1] The word "spiritual" here is evidently used in a relative sense. It puts the resurrection body in contrast with the grossness of flesh and blood in the earthly body, and indicates that it is to be a suitable partner or instrument of the glorified spirit.

In former times it was commonly thought necessary to affirm a material identity between the future body and that of the present. But Paul, while he intimates that there is some bond of connection between the one and the other, is far from affirming a material identity.[2] The only ground for inferring this identity is the association of the resurrection with the grave, and this is by no means of compelling force. The earth is the common grave of the race. In death men universally give back their bodies to the mass of physical nature. Suppose, then, that one should wish to express in vivid rhetorical phrase the fact that out of the mass of physical nature the constituents of new bodies will be taken through the marvellous working of God's power; what better could he do than to speak of the grave as yielding up its dead? This is the fitting equivalent in popular discourse for the declaration that physical nature which receives the old body is to be the source of the new and far more perfect body which is forever to mirror the glory of the indwelling spirit. In reconstituting man's physical being material identity is of no consequence whatever. One set of molecules is just as good as another of the same order. It is therefore enormously improbable that God has devised an intricate and far-reaching economy for conserving from each body the quantity of matter necessary for physical perfection, and has undertaken to gather together in the day of the resurrection the scattered particles which are comprised

[1] 1 Cor. xv. 42–44, 50. [2] 1 Cor. xv. 35–38.

in this quantity. Sameness of type, resulting from the operation of the same organizing principle, provides for the proper identity of the body throughout the changes of earthly life; and there is no occasion to suppose any further basis of identity in the future state.

Reference was made to an apparent exception to the customary New Testament association of the resurrection with a distinct era. Taken by itself Paul's language in 2 Cor. v. 1–5 might be regarded as indicative of a belief that the time of the individual's departure from the earth is the time of his investment with a heavenly corporeity. But more explicit statements show that the apostle conceived of the resurrection as a distinct future crisis for men collectively.[1] Some interpreters, it is true, have concluded that between the writing of First and Second Corinthians Paul changed his view. But when either epistle was written the apostle was far along in his theological development. Moreover, only a few months apparently intervened between the composition of the first epistle to the church at Corinth and the second. It is to be esteemed, therefore, much more likely that Paul in 2 Cor. v. 1–5 rhetorically ignored, in his personal anticipation, the interval between death and resurrection, than that he meant to give expression to a pronounced disagreement with the communication addressed so shortly before to the Corinthians. Very possibly Paul may have shifted his point of view somewhat in his later days. As between the apocalyptic conception, with its stress upon the exterior crisis in the progress of the kingdom, and the more spiritual conception wherein the principal emphasis falls upon inward fellowship with God through Christ, he may have inclined to the latter. Nevertheless, it requires more evidence than is available to make credible the supposition that he consciously rejected, at any time, the apocalyptic order of representation. The analogy of

[1] 1 Thess. iv. 16, 17; 1 Cor. xv. 23, 51, 52.

the Johannine writings, which, with all their spiritual and idealizing tendency, give still a place to the apocalyptic idea, argues against Paul's renunciation of the same. Again, it is noticeable that in Phil. iii, 20, 21, Paul associates the exercise of Christ's resurrection power with His future coming from heaven. Still further, the words in 2 Tim. ii, 18, implying as they do that the resurrection belongs under the category of a future event, are not fully reconcilable with the notion that for each individual it is coincident with death.

A notion, having a point of kinship with the revised conception of the resurrection attributed to Paul, is that which supposes within the present body one of more subtle essence, and regards the latter as being disengaged at death from the former. The difficulty with this view is a total lack of proof, both in the sphere of science and of Scripture.

As to the transformation of nature we have this declaration of Paul: "The earnest expectation of the creation waiteth for the revealing of the sons of God. For the creation was subjected to vanity, not of its own will, but by reason of Him who subjected it, in hope that also the creation itself shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the liberty of the glory of the children of God."[1] A like consummation is pictured in John's comprehensive words: "I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth are passed away; and the sea is no more."[2] To attempt an exact interpretation of these passages would be a profitless venture. Probably neither Paul nor John had any information to give beyond the general idea of a natural system so constituted as to be a suitable theatre for the subjects of the resurrection; and to this much consistent thinking offers no objection.

It has often been noticed that Paul says nothing in his epistles about the resurrection of the wicked. This may be

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[1] Rom. viii. 19–21. [2] Rev. xxi. 1. Compare Ps. cii. 26; Isa. xxxiv. 4, li. 6, lxv. 17, 18.

in large part explained by the consideration that the epistles were addressed to those who, in the judgment of charity, were to be counted true disciples of Christ, and the subject of the resurrection was considered only in such points of view as might be of immediate interest to them. A fact less easily disposed of is the representation of the resurrection as an object of earnest pursuit, a prize to be won in the way of fidelity and devotion to Christ.[1] On the whole, the Epistles of Paul leave room for doubt as to his belief in the resurrection of the wicked. It is only in the Book of Acts that he appears on record as holding that there is to be a resurrection both of the just and the unjust.[2]

IV. — The Judgment.

In the scriptural representation this event follows immediately upon the resurrection, is consummated by Christ in person, and is co-extensive with the race.[3] It is portrayed with dramatic vividness and intensity. The most solemn strains of poetry and the most graphic delineations of the artist have not transcended the plane of the biblical description.

The great truth lodged in the total representation of the judgment is the certain rectification of all disparity between desert and fortune, the certain and unqualified consummation of the judicial process which is going on in the world. We are notified that the work of sifting out the evil is to be carried to entire completion, that whatever is unfit for the spiritual and eternal kingdom of Christ is to be separated so that this kingdom shall appear without spot or blemish.

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[1] Phil. iii. 11.

[2] Acts xxiv. 15. Compare John v. 28, 29; Rev. xx. 11–15.

[3] Matt. xi. 24, xiii. 30, 39, 49, xvi. 27, xxv. 31–46; John v. 22–29, xii. 48; Acts x. 42, xvii. 31; 2 Cor. v. 10; 2 Thess. i. 7–10; 2 Tim. iv. 1; 2 Pet. ii. 1–9, iii. 10–13; Rev. xx. 11–15.

These, in our view, are the dogmatic elements which are comprised in the account of the judgment as given in the New Testament. In this account, as is wont to be the case with vivid prophetical picturing, the culmination is put for the whole process. A more prosaic and leisurely contemplation has to pay regard to antecedent stages of judgment. It must include a reference to the witness of the Holy Spirit as an inner judgment, an attestation, while it is in force, of heirship to eternal life. Again it must involve a due rating of the fact that fellowship with Christ in the intermediate state, or conscious unfitness for that fellowship, has the virtue of a sentence from the Divine Judge. In consideration of the length of the intermediate state for the great mass of men, it must be concluded that the vast majority of the race experiences no inconsiderable installment of judgment before the great concluding epoch pictured in revelation. If, in addition to this fact, we consider the operation of ordinary psychological laws to continue after death, we shall find further reason for allowing the thought of the intermediate state to modify our conception of the judgment. Under the operation of these laws the remote is reduced to small dimensions. Suppose then, that one dies at the age of ten, and has ten thousand years of conscious life before the resurrection era. In the retrospect the period of earthly life will naturally be reduced well nigh to the vanishing point. Must it not, therefore, seem very artificial and strange to have that brief period passed under detailed scrutiny before God's tribunal, and made a basis of eternal destiny, to the neglect of all the experience of the prolonged age intervening? Could it seem to the crucified thief an appropriate procedure, after having spent several thousand years with Christ in paradise, and progressed through all this long period in spiritual stature, to have the record which preceded the crucifixion judicially reproduced? Instances of this kind advise us not to interpret too literally the representation of a review of all earthly conduct at the

great assize. As previously noticed, the New Testament in pursuance of its practical aim to furnish adequate motives to right conduct in this world does not stop to consider the intermediate state, but links earthly doing immediately with eternal destiny. This is, practically, as has been said, the important point of view. Still a complete theory must take account of the age-long life for the majority of the race in the intermediate state; and when this is done it must seem an unnatural excess of formality to bring the earthly record into specific review. What fixes destiny is the ultimate character. The deeds done in the body derive their significance from this point of view. Earthly conduct invites to an approving or condemnatory sentence in the divine mind according to the permanent deposit which it has made in the ethical and religious nature. Translated out of the language of popular rhetoric into that of dogmatic specification, this is what the New Testament representation means. It foreshadows the great fact that there is an ultimate dispensation in which universally there shall be a proper adjustment between lot and character, a final consignment of each individual to his own place. The introduction of this dispensation may have its spectacular accompaniments; but it is no part of the province of dogma to catalogue these, or to insist upon the literal fulfillment of this or that element of prophetical picturing.[1]

V. — The Final Dispensation.

The light of prophecy casts a momentary gleam beyond the throne of judgment, and discloses two companies: the one upon

[1] The literalist may well be made to hesitate when he discovers that a detailed review before a judgment throne of a company numbering only fifty times as many as are now living on the earth would require an interval of not less than two thousand years, even should only one second be granted to the examination of each individual.

the right hand, the other upon the left; the one pronounced blessed, the other accursed; the one welcomed to a city of which God and the Lamb are the unchanging light, the other cast into the outer darkness; the one heir to eternal life and received into a kingdom prepared from the foundation of the world, the other subjected to the second death and dispatched into the fire prepared for the devil and his angels.[1]

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[1] Matt. xxv. 34–40, 46; Rev. xxi. 22–27, xxii. 1–5; Matt. xxv. 30, 41–46, v. 29, 30, viii. 12, xviii. 8, 9; Mark ix. 43–48; Rev. xx. 14, 15, xxi. 8.

A few words on biblical terminology will not be inappropriate at this point. Of the three terms, Sheol, Hades, and Gehenna, used to foreshadow the lot and location of men beyond this life, the last only is assigned a thoroughly distinct and uniform significance. In correspondence with the limited development of eschatology in the Old Testament, Sheol denotes generally the common receptacle of the dead, the deep, silent, shadowed pit, beneath the earth's surface, where the souls of all classes of mortals experience the relative emptiness and oblivion of a shadelike existence (Gen. xxxvii. 35, xlii. 38; Deut. xxxii. 22; 1 Sam. ii. 6; Job vii. 9, x. 21, 22, xi. 8, xiv. 13, xvii. 13, 16, xxvi. 6; Ps. vi. 5, ix. 17, xxx. 3, xlix. 19, lv. 15, lxxxvi. 13, lxxxviii. 5, 12, lxxxix. 48; Prov. i, 12, v. 5, vii. 27, ix. 17, 18, xv. 11, 24, xxiii. 14, xxvii. 20, xxx. 16; Eccl. ix. 5. 6; Cant. viii. 6; Isa. v. 14, xiv. 9, 15, xxxviii. 10, 11, 18; Lam. iii. 6; Ezek. xxxi. 14–18, xxxii. 18–24; Hab. ii. 5). But, inasmuch as its subterranean location assimilates it in a measure to the grave which receives the bodies of the departed, it is used sometimes where the latter term seems to be in place. Says Schultz: "In later as well as in olden times, the grave is, beyond all doubt, the prototype with which the idea of Sheol is associated — not as if the two were confounded, but, because the abode of the dead being thought of as underground, the imagination naturally pictures it as a grave. Even in ordinary language the two ideas readily alternate. The inhabitants of Sheol are those 'who dwell in the dust,' who go down to the pit" (Old Testament Theology, II. 324). Being viewed as the common abode of the dead, Sheol was not of course described as specifically a place of punishment. Only as the death which brought men into its inclosure was regarded as a manifestation of divine wrath, did it appear in Old Testament contemplation as a theatre of retribution.

The corresponding New Testament term, Hades, is used in some connections in much the same general way for the region of the dead (Rev. xx. 13; Acts ii. 27, 31); but in other relations it is given a more positive association with the future retribution upon the wicked than pertains to Sheol (Matt. xi. 23, xvi. 18; Luke x. 15, xvi. 23). The meaning of Gehenna, on the other hand, is uniformly that of the place or estate of future punishment (Matt. v. 22, 29, 30, x. 28, xviii. 9, xxiii. 15, 33; Mark ix. 43, 45, 47; Luke xii. 5; James

Whatever figurative elements enter into the description of the fate of the wicked, there is no legitimate escape from the conclusion that the description was meant to convey an impression of irremediable doom. Such a doom is emphatically intimated by the *aspect of finality* which the facts associated with the sentence pronounced upon the wicked impart thereto. The sentence comes after trial, at the end of the world, in the issue of a general judgment which is pictured as the completing act of God's judicial agency.

A doom that excludes all remedy is also indicated by the emphatic terms which are employed to express the punishment visited upon the wicked. They are cast into the *unquenchable fire*;[1] they go away into *eternal punishment*;[2] they suffer *eternal destruction* from the face of the Lord.[3] The word αἰώνιος, which is rendered into English as "eternal" in the above passages, does not, it is true, necessarily denote endless duration; but it certainly is capable of that meaning, being applied even to the Divine Being,[4] as well as to the presumably imperishable blessedness and riches of the righteous.[5] Being thus capable of signifying the never-ending, the reasonable conclusion is that it was meant to have this meaning in relation to the punishment of the wicked, since that punishment is put in antithesis to the lot of the righteous, and is given in every context in which it is mentioned a decisive aspect of finality. To assume that αἰώνιος was consciously used in the restricted sense of a long, but not endless, period is incongruous with all the pains taken to convey an impression of finality as regards the outcome of faith and righteousness on the one hand, and of unbelief and wickedness on the other.

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iii. 6). A like significance belongs to the word Tartarus, which is used in a verbal form in 2 Pet. ii. 4.

[1] Matt. iii. 12; Mark ix. 43–48; Rev. xx. 10.

[2] Matt. xxv. 46.

[3] 2 Thess. i. 9.

[4] Rom. xvi. 26; Heb. ix. 14.

[5] Matt. xxv. 46; 2 Cor. iv. 17, v. 1; Heb. v. 9, ix. 15.

Once more, the fact of an irremediable doom for at least some of the wicked is clearly indicated by the description of a sin which is never to be forgiven. "Verily I say unto you, All their sins shall be forgiven unto the sons of men, and their blasphemies wherewith soever they shall blaspheme: but whosoever shall blaspheme against the Holy Spirit hath never forgiveness, but is guilty of an eternal sin."[1] "If any man see his brother sinning a sin not unto death, he shall ask, and God will give him life for them that sin not unto death. There is a sin unto death: not concerning this do I say that he should make request."[2] The force of such language is not easily evaded. If it be said that we are not definitely informed that anyone has ever committed the sin in question, the obvious reply is that Christ and the apostles were not of such a speculative temper as to make it likely that they would deal with far-fetched hypotheses. Their solemn declarations, therefore, respecting an unpardonable sin imply a real liability of men to its perpetration. If, again, it be said that the sin described is indeed never forgiven, but the penalty of it may be discharged in a long though limited period, an equally obvious reply is at hand, since the divine forgiveness, in New Testament usage, means restoration to divine favor and communion, and not merely the bare cancelling of a specific penalty; accordingly, the endless exclusion from forgiveness must be regarded as signifying endless exclusion from divine favor and communion.

The evidence which may be urged against the notion of irremediable doom is contained in certain passages, found mostly in the Epistles of Paul, which strongly emphasize the unifying and reconciling office of Christ.[3] Taken in their

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[1] Mark iii. 28, 29; Matt. xii.31, 32. The sin referred to in these texts may be described as desperate and persistent resistance of ample light.

[2] 1 John v. 16.

[3] Rom. v. 15, 18, xi. 32; 1 Cor. xv. 22, 27, 28; 2 Cor. v. 18, 19; Eph. i. 9, 10; Phil. ii. 10, 11; Col. i. 19, 20; 1 Tim. iv. 10. See also John xii. 32; Acts iii. 21; Rev. xx. 14, 15.

literal verbal sense several of these texts can be interpreted as teaching universal restorationism. But were they meant to inculcate this doctrine? We are far from being persuaded that this conclusion, which involves the New Testament in sharp contradiction with itself, is warranted. So far as Paul's sentences are concerned, they are largely explained by the Pauline idealism, which led the apostle repeatedly to speak of the work of Christ according to its proper aim and intrinsic tendency. As he represented the trespass of Adam according to its tendency, and so pictured the race as condemned with the forefather, though this is not the precise fact, so he described the work of Christ according to its ideal aim and intrinsic tendency or fitness to reconcile all unto God. This idealizing habit of thought and expression, taken in connection with his undoubting confidence that the lordship of Christ would ultimately be gloriously demonstrated, and universally recognized by the rational creation, either with loyal delight or under the compelling force of divine disclosure, explains the whole line of his statements which have a seeming affiliation with restorationism. That he thought of the obdurately wicked as candidates for a hopeless doom is clearly intimated by the picture which he drew of the divine vengeance which, at the second coming of Christ, shall be rendered "to them that know not God and to them that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus: who shall suffer punishment, even eternal destruction from the face of the Lord and from the glory of His might."[1]

As for the few texts outside of Paul's writings which have a restorationist sound, there is very little difficulty involved in their interpretation. John xii. 32 may be regarded as a vivid rhetorical expression of the arresting power and unique attraction of Christ crucified. It does not state that all men are to be drawn so effectually to true faith as to obtain eternal

[1] 2 Thess. i. 7–9.

salvation; and it cannot fairly be questioned that the evangelist who recorded the words thought that some men would persist in unbelief and become the subjects of the abiding wrath of God.[1] Acts iii. 21, in speaking of the restoration of all things, simply points forward to a great consummation of the Messianic kingdom, which is to precede the closing up of the dispensation. The description given in Rev. xx. 14 of the casting of death and Hades into the lake of fire cannot be regarded as picturing the end or absence of retribution, for in the very next verse it is said, "If any was not found written in the book of life, he was cast into the lake of fire."

We have spoken thus far of an irremediable doom without attempting to determine whether this consists in conscious suffering or in annihilation. The general opinion of the Church has embraced the former alternative, though occasionally an earnest advocate of annihilation has appeared. In the language of some apologists for the latter view the phrase "conditional immortality" plays a conspicuous rôle. The phrase is in one sense of indubitable propriety, since the assumption of the creation of souls involves the conclusion that their continued being is conditioned upon the purpose of the Creator. But in the annihilationist's creed there is the more specific conclusion that inherence in Christ is, according to God's purpose and plan, an essential condition of immortality.

The fact that the Scriptures describe the fate of the wicked by such terms as death and destruction may be cited in favor of annihilation.[2] But it is certain that these terms are used, in various connections, in a figurative sense, with reference rather to a wretched and impoverished state of being than to cessation of being.[3] They afford, therefore, no certain ground

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[1] John iii. 36; 1 John v. 16.

[2] Matt. vii. 13, x. 28; Rom. vi. 23, viii. 13; John iii. 16; 2 Thess. i. 9; Rev. xx. 14, 15.

[3] John v. 24; Rom. vii. 9–11; Eph. ii. 1; Col. ii. 13; Matt. x. 6, 39; Luke xix. 10; 2 Pet. iii. 6, 7.

for affirming annihilation proper. Indeed, so far as scriptural data are concerned, the references to the undying worm, to eternal punishment, and to the smoke of torment ascending forever,[1] furnish quite as much evidence on the side of conscious suffering as can be cited in favor of the opposing alternative. There is some room, however, for the suspicion that the purpose underlying this order of expressions was rather to paint irremediable doom, with wretchedness so long as consciousness should last, than to teach positively strict endlessness of painful existence. On either theory, the punishment is endless, in the sense that the condemnatory sentence is never to be lifted, never to be succeeded by restoration to favor and blessing. Specific instances in the Scriptures indicate that the word "eternal" may be applied to an act or process which, though temporary in itself, induces irreversible consequences.[2]

On purely rational grounds something can be said in favor of the annihilation of the incorrigibly wicked. Why should they be preserved to mar to all eternity the perfection of the universe? If it be said that the exigencies of the divine government call for their preservation and continued misery, it is still difficult to construe any such governmental exigencies. The knowledge of their lot certainly cannot be regarded as perpetually needed by the righteous to confirm them in their holy and blessed estate. To those who have reached the proper height of loving communion with God the fear of pain must become an inferior incentive compared with the horror of the thought of sinning against infinite holiness and love. The supreme spiritual motives to perfect allegiance must be so great, that all the motives which could come from the knowledge of a theatre of suffering in the outer darkness must be, in the comparison, only as a rush-light to the sun. Thus we are left without the ability to specify any good

[1] Mark ix. 48; Matt. xxv. 46; Rev. xiv. 11. [2] Heb. vi. 2; Jude 7.

reason for the preservation of lost men. But on a theme which reaches like this into mist and obscurity, it little becomes us to dogmatize with full confidence. We have the fact of irremediable doom; we have no distinct warrant for annihilation; we do well, so far as any attempt at indoctrination is concerned, to leave the subject where it is left by the Scriptures.

A philosophical justification of an irrepealable sentence against a man is found solely in the possibility of moral suicide, or the extinction of spiritual capacity by continued perversity. The Scriptures, it is true, do not seem definitely to assign such a ground to the ultimate fate of the wicked. But it is not arbitrary to say that this is due largely to the practical aim and to the popular, vivid, and concrete style of the Scriptures. It puts the urgency of right conduct upon earth more vividly to associate it immediately with future destiny than it does to speak of its result upon the spiritual nature, and then to draw the inference that this nature, according to its gravitation toward good or evil, is a ground of eternal blessedness or of eternal perdition. Had they been wont to use a more prosaic and abstract form of discourse, the Scriptures would doubtless have given a larger place to the latter representation. As it is, they cannot be said to have discarded it altogether; on the contrary, there are solemn intimations in the words of Christ that the extinction of the higher capacities of the soul is the great penalty of misdoing.[1] A nature impoverished by the loss of its better capacities, and impelled by the inferior appetencies which cannot be satisfied in the life to come, is of necessity a subject of future punishment. It has in itself the elements of perdition, and needs no such instrument of torture as is supposed in the preposterous theory of literal hell fire.

We have characterized the foregoing as the sole philosophi-

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[1] Matt. vi. 23; Luke xi. 34; Matt. xiii. 12, xxv. 29; Mark iv. 25; Luke viii. 18.

cal justification of irremediable doom. In this we have ignored the reasoning of Thomas Aquinas[1] and some others that sin, as being against an infinite being, has an infinite demerit, and is therefore justly visited with endless punishment. Such reasoning is not adapted to carry conviction. It leaves no room for a proper distinction between sins, since all alike must be regarded as infinite, inasmuch as all are more or less directly against God. It depreciates the significance which ought to be assigned to the interior moral disposition in determining the merit or demerit of an act. One would need to suppose, on the basis of the objective measure in question, that to slander the race is an incomparably greater sin than to slander an individual, whereas it is by no means certain that the latter may not involve just as much malice as could be put into the former. The true measure of sin is subjective and intensive, not exterior and extensive. Doubtless the greatness and the holiness of the object which is sinned against serve to enlarge the measure of the sin where that object is distinctly apprehended as standing in the way of sin. But even then the measure of the sin is not determined by the mere quantity or quality of the object. It is not the degree of greatness and holiness sinned against that gives the measure of sin, but rather the degree of selfish and reckless defiance of greatness and holiness. When this is infinite the sin can properly be described as infinite; but who is prepared to say that even the most enlightened devil can put an infinite degree of selfish and reckless defiance of God into his transgression? It is to be noticed, moreover, that a sin in which there is a conscious reference to God may be less than one in which there is no such reference. The perplexed soul which gives transient harborage to a doubt about the justice of divine providence certainly transgresses in a less degree than the one who, without a reference to God, nurtures in his heart

[1] Sum. Theol. II. 1. 87. 4.

murderous violence against his neighbor. We are thus forced to conclude, that the sin of a man, whether with or without conscious reference to God, is not properly infinite, and can be so described only in a loose rhetorical use of language.

There is a growing tendency in Christian minds to repudiate the possibility of eternal suffering being the lot of a majority of the race. This implies of course either that the incorrigibly wicked will be annihilated, or that they will in fact make a minority. Christ's words in response to the question, "Are there few that be saved?"[1] may seem to stand in the way of the latter assumption. But the scope designed to be given to His words is matter for inquiry. Few, if any, would wish to contend that they distinctly contemplated that great fraction of the race which passes off the earthly stage before reaching the opportunity for intelligent choice of one way or another. As regards those having opportunity for moral decisions, the words were undoubtedly true to the appearance of things in that unbelieving and recreant generation; but who can say that they were meant to give the picture of what must be found in any and every age in spite of all divine expenditure through a remedial economy? With the progress of the ages the conditions may be greatly changed. Moreover it is to be noticed that Christ in another connection suggested a basis of an improved expectation by saying, "With God all things are possible." Doubtless He felt deeply the proneness of men to enter the broad way. Still it is properly subject to question whether He designed to affirm that the great majority will be sure to repel continuously all power of salutary arrest and to pursue the wrong way up to the point of eternal destiny. Revelation affords here no unequivocal verdict. Meanwhile a worthy optimism cannot refrain from the hope that the heirs of the kingdom — "the great multi-

[1] Luke xiii. 23, 24; Matt. vii. 13, 14.

tude which no man can number"[1] — will be found greatly to exceed those who have no part with Christ.

As respects the heavenly estate into which the righteous enter, an ample ground for the most exalted expectation is supplied by their filial relations to God. In a filial consciousness the world to come can but stand forth in bright outlines. Paul's reasoning, "If children, then heirs, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ,"[2] commends itself equally to head and heart, and opens the door upon a measureless prospect. Whom God admits to His household and owns as His children He will undoubtedly enrich with no ordinary estate. It must be His desire and purpose to furnish them, out of the infinite treasures of His own perfection and blessedness, the highest measure of pure felicity of which they are capable.

Heaven is a sphere of unique blessedness as being the sphere of a unique harmony. External nature, ordered as perfect and unchecked benevolence may dictate, is there completely adjusted, we may believe, to the spiritual bodies of the saints, and spreads out into a scene of transcendent beauty. Each member of the heavenly community, radiant with spiritual perfection, is an object of complacency and spontaneous delight to every other. Thus, mutually giving and receiving holy joys, all know the fruition of a society in which love is absolutely sovereign. As the center of this holy society, the ground of its harmony, the life of its life, sufficiently known to invite to full confidence and loving communion, sufficiently mysterious in the infinite depth of His being to afford a field of endless research and revelation, is He who is truly known to be Immanuel, the everpresent One, who is above, and in, and through, all things, and by whom all things consist. Each heir of immortal life knows Him as the source of his own perfection, and sees His grace and beauty mirrored in all the rest

[1] Rev. vii. 9. [2] Rom. viii. 17.

of the heavenly host. So all are "perfected into one," and the prayer of Christ gains its ideal fulfillment. To the Church militant, struggling through earthly vicissitudes and battling with foes, has succeeded the Church triumphant, dwelling in unclouded light and secure in its eternal inheritance.

The greatness of God and of His universe guarantees to this company of His immortal children opportunities of adequate variety as well as of endless progress in their experiences. No occasion of satiety needs to be apprehended from lack of fresh discoveries and new points of view. Moreover, it is characteristic of the spiritual and eternal to be permanently satisfying. "There is this great difference," says Augustine, "between things temporal and things eternal, that a temporal object is valued more before we possess it, and begins to prove worthless the moment we attain it, because it does not satisfy the soul, which has its only true and sure resting-place in eternity: an eternal object, on the other hand, is loved with greater ardor when it is in possession than while it is still an object of desire, for no one in his longing for it can set a higher value on it than really belongs to it, so as to think it comparatively worthless when he finds it of less value than he thought; on the contrary, however high the value any man may set upon it when he is on his way to possess it, he will find it, when it comes into his possession of higher value still." In the symbolism of the Revelator the abundant provision for unfailing freshness and satisfaction of spirit, on the part of the inhabitants of heaven, is represented by a "river of water of life, bright as a crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and the Lamb."

APPENDIX.

I.

THE MIRACLE OF CHRIST'S RESURRECTION.

A BRIEF summary of grounds for faith in the historical verity of Christ's resurrection may fitly be appended to the discussion which has been awarded to the general subject of miracles.

1. The resurrection of Christ is perfectly consonant with the unique character and extraordinary mission ascribed to Him by the New Testament in the whole trend of its teaching. Why should not the career of One who was so exceptional in character and mission pass on to an exceptional goal? If it was really His vocation to be the Saviour of men, His resurrection is properly reckoned an essential factor in the perfect fulfillment of His vocation. It was supremely adapted to support confidence in His saving office, and to enkindle a salutary hope in men as respects their own heirship to immortal life. Such was the vital conviction of the New Testament writers,[1] and the reason of the case can easily be seen to have been with them. The sober conclusion must be that if it was worth while to provide an extraordinary Redeemer, it was worth while also to furnish Him with the redemptive potency incontestably inherent in the great fact of His resurrection.

2. The resurrection of Christ is made credible by the intimate relation existing between the recorded forecast of the same and an indubitably fulfilled prophecy. All the evangelists testify that Christ foretold to the disciples, with specification of approximate date and of circumstances, His violent death.[2]

[1]Rom. i. 4; iv. 25; viii. 11, 34; 1 Cor. xv. 12–23; 1 Thess. iv. 14; Phil. iii. 10; Eph. i. 19, 20; ii. 5, 6; 1 Peter i. 3; Heb. xiii. 20.

[2]Matt, xvi. 21–23; xvii. 9–13; xx. 17–19; xxi. 37–44; xxvi. 1, 2, 12, 21–25; Mark viii. 31–33; ix. 9–13, 31, 32; x. 33, 34; xii. 6–11; xiv. 8, 18–21; Luke ix. 22, 31; xviii. 32, 33; xx. 13–17; John ii. 19–22; xii. 7, 32, 33; xiii. 21–30.

They are clear and emphatic upon this point. Nor does it lie within the limits of sane criticism to allege that these prophetic utterances were manufactured *post eventum*. Some of them appear as part and parcel of a fabric as remote from an appearance of invention as anything in the gospel narratives. What else, for instance, than a true reminiscence can be supposed to be contained in Peter's impetuous rebuke to the prophesying Christ, and in the intense response of Christ, "Get thee behind me, Satan?" Features like these stamp the account in which they stand as an excerpt from real history. In like manner the parable of the householder and the wicked husbandmen is commended by its simple and graphic character as a substantially true reproduction of the Master's words, and so testifies to a distinct forecast by Him of His violent death. Now, the evangelists who record this line of well-accredited prophesying associate with it another line of prophesying; namely, that respecting the rising of the Son of Man from the dead. Our contention is that the fulfillment of the one line of prophesying makes credible the fulfillment of the other also. He who foresaw with such certainty that He must pass on to a tragic death may very well be regarded as having been endowed with authentic foresight when He spoke of His resurrection from the dead. To be sure, it may be alleged that the recorded forecast of the resurrection does not stand on a parity with the recorded prediction of the death upon the cross. In fact, the plea has been made, that if Christ had thrown out any clear intimations of a resurrection the disciples would not have been so disheartened and paralyzed by the death of their Master. But this is an induction which merits very scanty respect. Only by slow degrees did the disciples rise to anything like a spiritual conception of the Messianic kingdom. From their habitual point of view the death of the Messiah was a dark enigma. It seemed to them like the swallowing up of all hope and promise. They remained unreconciled to the thought of such a terrible issue. By natural consequence, while their minds

thus rebelled against the thought of the death of their Master, the idea of His resurrection remained in mist and obscurity. As one of the evangelists reports, they had questionings on the subject, and shrank from asking explanations.[1] The message on either point was for the time being beyond them. When, therefore, the catastrophe came, when the Master went down under a storm of hate and contempt, and the shadow of His ignominy darkened the pathway of their own lives, naturally they were too stricken in heart to entertain any substantial hope. To triumph over the dismal appearance required a faith approaching more nearly to omnipotent virtue than any which they were able to exercise. Considering the plane of religious understanding reached by them when they were confronted by the tragedy of Calvary, we may affirm that their practical neglect for the time being of the thought of a resurrection of the crucified One is no disproof of the fact that He gave prophetic intimations of His resurrection as well as of His death. Nor is it necessary to stop with this mere negativing of the objector's plea. It can be claimed that an appearance of incongruity would attach to Christ's representations respecting Himself, unless it be granted that along with the forecast of the ignominious death there went a prophecy of triumph over death and the grave. The profound emphasis which Christ placed upon allegiance to Himself and the eminent place which He claimed for Himself in the divine kingdom would have been in palpable disharmony with His references to His crucifixion, had no intimations been added of a life coming to glorious manifestation beyond the cross and the tomb. The record of these intimations stands as a congruous element in a historical complex. We claim, therefore, that it is reasonable to accept that record as representative of a historical verity and to rate it, in consideration of its close association with a fulfilled prophecy, as a support to faith in the resurrection of our Lord.

3. The victorious confidence, with which the disciples took up and prosecuted the cause of their crucified Master, must

[1] Mark ix. 10, 32.

be referred to some adequate cause. The scholarship of the Christian world is practically agreed in identifying that cause with the undoubting belief of the disciples in the resurrection of Christ. Various critics may question the fact of the resurrection, but it requires exceptional hardihood to deny the triumphant belief of the disciples in the matter. What accounts for that belief? For one who does not rule out miracles by dogmatic fiat the most satisfactory explanation will take the form of this statement: The belief was enkindled and sustained by the actual appearance of Christ as victor over death and the grave.

Among the opposing explanations which have been offered, that which appeals to a sham resurrection, or the awakening of the entombed Christ from a swoon, hardly deserves serious consideration. The smiting words of Strauss scarcely exaggerate its failure to meet the historical situation. He says: "One who crept forth half dead from the grave, and crawled about a sickly patient, who had need of medical care, of bandaging, nursing, and strengthening, and who must still in the end succumb to his sufferings, could not have made upon the disciples that impression that He was the conqueror of death and the grave and the prince of life, which lay back of their ensuing activity. Such a resuscitation would simply have weakened the impression made upon them by His life and death; at most it would have given to it a pathetic cast; by no possibility could it have transformed their sorrow into enthusiasm, their reverence into worship."[1]

Not very much superior is the explanation which refers the unshaken belief of the disciples to illusion or subjective fantasy. This amounts practically to an attempt to escape miracle at the expense of attributing miraculous virtue to illusion. It strains rational conviction to the point of torture when we are asked to conclude that a mere ghost, dressed up by a distempered imagination, could have wrought such a mighty and substantial result. Then, too, it is troublesome to conceive how groups of individuals, some of whom at least were

[1]Das Leben Jesu für das deutsche Volk bearbeitet, 2te Aufl. p. 298.

as hardheaded and practical men as might be found in that age, could have been subjects for a common and simultaneous illusion. It is to be noted, moreover, that the disciples believed, not merely that they saw the risen Christ, but that they also received messages from Him. This is the common testimony of the evangelists. Is it to be supposed that their senses conspired to play them tricks? Of course, the reality of the messages may be denied. But the fact remains that they are conformable to the tenor of the Gospels, and that in their combination of simplicity and grandeur they are such messages as might properly be supposed to have been spoken by the risen Lord.

Decidedly more respectable than either of the attempted explanations just considered is that which refers the belief of the primitive disciples to interior visions wrought by objective agency. The assumption here is that Christ, apart from the body which was consigned to the grave, wrought upon the minds of the disciples, thus giving them a sense of His recovered presence. The visions were not pure hallucinations. Christ was back of them, though simply as a spiritual agent, and not as an embodied personality. With respect to this theory, the natural conclusion is that it is not worth while. It assumes a miracle, only in a psychical as opposed to a physical range. No appreciable advantage belongs to such an exchange, and there attaches to it the disadvantage that it bars out the means of accounting for various items which are contained in the resurrection narratives. In particular the explicit uncontradicted testimony to the empty tomb makes against its acceptance.

4. We have from the hand of the Apostle Paul testimony to a succession of appearances of the risen Christ—testimony given under conditions which secure to it substantially the same worth that would belong to the direct statements of eyewitnesses. It is supposed by some recent historians that Paul may have been converted within a year from the death of Christ. At most only an interval of a few years fell between the two events. From that point he was in communica-

tion with witnesses to the resurrection. He had a prolonged interview with Peter about three years after his espousal of the new faith. As having been formerly a special agent of the Pharisaic and priestly party in its attempt to suppress those who believed on Jesus, he must have known what that party was able to offer against the fact of the resurrection. He was on the field and had the advantage of close association with the bitter opponents as well as with the friends of the new religious movement. While he was thus furnished with substantial sources of information, he wrote under conditions which advised to carefulness and sobriety in his statements; for, in the third decade from the crucifixion many of those to whom he referred as witnesses of the reappearance of Christ must have been still at hand, as indeed he took pains to affirm. We are compelled, therefore, to admit that we are confronted by a most weighty historical testimony when we take up these words of the apostle: "I delivered unto you first of all that which also I received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures; and that He was buried; and that He hath been raised on the third day according to the Scriptures; and that He appeared to Cephas; then to the twelve; then He appeared to above five hundred brethren at once, of whom the greater part remain until now, but some are fallen asleep; then He appeared to James; then to all the apostles."[1]

An attempt is sometimes made to discount this statement of Paul, and to turn it into evidence for a vision hypothesis, by greatly emphasizing the fact that the apostle numbers himself among those to whom the resurrection of Christ had been directly attested. Paul, it is contended, had only a vision of Christ, and therefore it may be presumed that the witnesses to whom he referred were not supposed to have had any more tangible proofs of a resurrection than that contained in mere visions. But this construction is quite manifestly unwarranted and warped. There is no reason to infer that Paul did not believe that Christ was objectively presented to himself be-

[1] 1 Cor. xv. 3–7.

fore the gates of Damascus. It is in truth utterly wide of the probability to suppose that he thought of that great experience as a mere matter of inward vision. In numbering himself, therefore, among those able to witness to the fact of the resurrection, he casts no doubt on the objective reality of the appearances of Christ to the earlier witnesses. Nor did he by any means intend to disconnect those appearances from an earthly theatre by his reference to an appearance from heaven. What his language implies is the belief that the risen Christ actually appeared to himself, not that He appeared in precisely the same way as to the others. The appearance from heaven corresponds with the thought of Christ as seated at the right hand of the Father, which seems to have been current among the disciples from a point adjacent to the first Christian Pentecost.

5. Though Paul's language does not contain an explicit mention of the empty tomb, it does contain an implicit reference thereto. Who can doubt that, when he spoke of the common tradition as affirming that Christ was buried and was raised on the third day, he thought of Joseph's tomb being emptied of its prisoner, and meant to say that this item was an undisputed part of the tradition? We have then an item witnessed to by all the New Testament writers who make any detailed reference to the resurrection; for each of the four evangelists begins his story of the Easter morning with a picture of the empty tomb.

Now, this item, respecting which we have such complete unanimity, is not of small historical significance. To suppose that a rumor got started about the tomb being empty, and that this rumor incited no one to make investigation into the matter is to suppose that both the disciples and their deadly opponents were dreamers living in dreamland. Too much was at stake on either side to admit of easy-going indolence. The tomb must have been found empty. What had become of the body? To charge the disciples with having stolen and concealed it is to make choice of an alternative that lands one in helpless absurdity. A dead body under their hand and a lie

upon their consciences could never have fitted the disciples to be the heroes and martyrs of a new dispensation. On the other hand, if their opponents had rifled the tomb they had but to produce their prey to confound the newborn enthusiasm of the sect of the Nazarene. So the empty tomb, unanimously witnessed to by the New Testament historians, joins with the appearances of the risen Christ as reported through the apostle to the Gentiles to bespeak faith in the fact of the resurrection.

6. Each of the evangelists is in agreement with Paul in teaching that the risen Christ appeared to the entire company of the apostles. Mark's Gospel, it is true, does not in the extant conclusion reach to a description of the appearance, but it clearly presumes upon the fact of the appearance sketched in the appended verses. Paul mentions two visitations of Christ to the whole group of the apostles. John also mentions two visitations, though taking note that Thomas was absent from the apostolic company on the occasion of the first of these.

7. The apparent discrepancies between the different accounts of the resurrection are due in no small degree to the fact that no one of them is complete. In reviewing them a sober historical judgment will require us not to reckon omissions as tantamount to denials. There is no reason, for instance, to suppose that Paul meant to deny that Christ appeared to one or more of the devoted women who were numbered among His followers. It suited his purpose to specify by name only such witnesses as by virtue of official station and general reputation had weight even in parts of the Christian domain remote from Jerusalem. Almost no significance therefore pertains to the omission. Scarcely more do the omissions of this or that evangelist discredit items in the narratives of the rest. Doubtless it remains an enigma, why Mark (and Matthew only less completely in his dependence upon Mark) passed over the appearances at Jerusalem and emphasized Galilee as the theatre of Christ's revisitation of the disciples. Possibly the explanation may be akin to that which eminent critics offer for the fact that the Judæan ministry of

Christ receives such scanty notice in the same Gospel. The Galilean point of view may have been predominant in the ultimate source upon which Mark's compendium of this section of the gospel history was based. In any event, it is to be noticed that Mark agrees with all the other evangelists in assuming that the disciples were still at Jerusalem when Christ came forth from the tomb. His narrative, therefore, at least provides an interval for possible appearances at Jerusalem before the retirement of the disciples to Galilee. Mindful of this fact, and taking note also of the exceeding brevity of Mark's treatment of the theme of the resurrection—a brevity such as to suggest mutilation of the original manuscript—we shall find no adequate reason for estimating the narrative of Luke and John by the positive contents of the second Gospel.[1]

We have said that omissions are not equivalent to contradictions. We may add that variations and even contradictions in details are no valid disproof of the essential fact to which they pertain. A reminiscence may be perfectly unfaltering as to a great central fact, while yet it is unable to reproduce with certainty this or that particular. A criticism, which has not become nearsighted and picayunish by too continuous grubbing in small details, will not magnify the import of discrepancies in the subordinate particulars of brief and independent narratives. We have the fact that a man of Paul's moral potency and intellectual calibre, on the basis of data gathered within a few years of Christ's death, specified as vouchers for the actual appearance of the risen Christ a full list of witnesses, the majority of whom were still alive at the time when he wrote. We have the unanimous testimony of the New Testament historians to the fact of the empty tomb. We have the concurrent testimony of Paul and all the evangelists to the appearance of Christ to the whole apostolic company. We have the fact that there was manifestly at work in the company of the disciples, very soon after the crucifixion, a mighty creative power such as might well flow from a great and unique event like the resurrection. We have the record

[1]Compare Friedrich Loofs, Die Auferstehungsberichte und ihr Wert.

of Christ's own forecast of His resurrection closely linked with the true prophecy of His violent death. We have the consideration that the resurrection may most reasonably be reckoned as a completing factor in the office of Saviour so prominently associated with Christ in the Gospels. Surely all this makes a basis upon which faith can rest without being in the slightest degree amenable to the charge of triviality or venturesomeness.

As respects the type of the body in which the risen Christ made His appearances, there are no adequate means of determination. On the one hand it can be said that a certain mystery attached to the movements of Christ in connection with these appearances, and that a sign may be found here that He was no longer under the restraints of a body of the common earthly type. On the other hand, it can be claimed that any extraordinary feature in His movements may be explained by the fact that the period for the self-chosen limitations of the servant-form was now past, and He was free to use His divine power in His own behalf. It may also be urged that some of the items reported in the gospel narratives are adverse to the supposition of a radical change of bodily type before the eve of the ascension. The subject is one upon which an attempt to dogmatize is not likely to be fruitful.

II.

ETHNIC SYSTEMS ESPECIALLY AS RESPECTS TRINITARIAN FEATURES.

A VARIABLE grouping of the gods, rather than any real parallel to the Christian Trinity, has in general been characteristic of the non-Christian religions. That the grouping should often have taken the form of triads is very little cause for surprise. In the first place, a ready suggestion of a triad has been supplied in the widespread conception of the universe as

consisting of three great provinces; namely, heaven, earth, and underworld; or, heaven, earth, and sea. A polytheistic system naturally assigned these provinces to as many different divinities. In the second place, a basis for the triad has been furnished in the family relation, as it has been carried over from the human to the divine sphere. Often a feminine counterpart or partner has been associated with a god, and a third divinity has stood to the pair as offspring or as trusted messenger. In the third place, as the result of a political consolidation of different districts and a fusion of different religious parties, a close association has been effected between different gods. Naturally in some of these instances of combination triads resulted. Finally, in so far as the element of priestly reflection, or conscious endeavor at system-making, has had place in filling out the content of a religion, a partiality for the number three may sometimes have wrought for the disposing of the gods in triads.

In the ancient polytheistic nature-religion of Babylonia, the conception of the threefold division of the world seems to have been back of the foremost representation of the gods as a triad. Anu stood for the god who presides in heaven, Bel for the immediate ruler of the earth, and Ea for the divinity who has his seat in the deep waters under the earth whence spring all fountains and streams. Alongside of this triad a second was in course of time developed, including Sin, Shamas, and Ramman, associated respectively with the moon, the sun, and the storm of rain. The subsistence of the *two* triads indicates a very loose and qualified sort of trinitarian faith among the Babylonians. As much is indicated furthermore by the great prominence given to divinities outside of these groups. The goddess Ishtar was accorded a high station, and Marduk, favored by the political prestige of Babylon, of which city he was the patron deity, came to outrank in practical importance every other member of the Babylonian pantheon. The Assyrian pantheon corresponded very nearly with the Babylonian, with the exception that the national god,

Ashur, was placed at the head, being given precedence over the primitive Babylonian triad.[1]

The ancient Egyptian religion, with its multiplicity of gods, furnished rather a record of triads than of a trinity proper. These triads were formed in many instances by a combination of the gods acknowledged in neighboring districts, the combination being made after the pattern of the family relation. "In the nomes," says Maspero, "where the master was a god, often he contented himself with a single spouse and a single son; often also two goddesses were associated with him, who held at once the place of sisters and spouses, according to the national usage. The triads formed by the addition of two goddesses were almost always broken up into two new triads, each of which included a paternal god, a goddess-mother, and a divinity standing in the relation of son."[2] Supplementing the more spontaneous development of triads, there was a grouping in which the reflection of a priestly school was a prominent factor. The school of Heliopolis assigned the work of creation to the great sun god Ra and to four couples of gods produced by him. To this ennead they annexed two secondary enneads composed of divinities selected from the multitude recognized in the local cults of Egypt. In this scheme it appears that a certain pre-eminence was given to one of the gods. But this pre-eminence had a very unsubstantial tenure. Various gods were practically made rivals of the sun god Ra, or, indeed were ranked under different names as sun gods. Prominent among these favorite divinities were Osiris, his sister and spouse Isis, and Horus, the son of Isis. We have here an interesting triad, but not one to which any considerable significance can be attached from the trinitarian point of view, since other triads were recognized, and moreover in the Osiris myth itself we have to do quite as much with a quaternion of gods as with a triad, a place being given to Set, the artful

[1]Compare Jastrow, The Religion of Babylonia and Assyria; Jeremias, in Lehrbuch der Religionsgeschichte, edited by Chantepie de la Saussaye.

[2]Histoire Ancienne des Peoples de l'Orient Classique, I. 104, 105.

brother of Osiris. Varied and shifting polytheistic combinations are what the Egyptian religion on the whole presents to us. In the speculatve thought of the priesthood, it is true, there may have been a sort of transcendence of the polytheistic standpoint, in favor of the conviction that all the gods are one, being but different forms of the supreme essence. But, as will be noticed in connection with the religious systems of India, this casting of the blanket of a pantheistic conception over the multiplicities of polytheism is at a very considerable remove from Christian trinitarianism.

In the Persian religion the triad seems not to have been any considerable factor. The rank of being standing next to the good deity, Ahura Mazda, consisted of not less than six members. Among these so-called "Amesha Spentas" a certain pre-eminence may have pertained to the first two, Vohu Mano and Asha Vahista. Nevertheless in idea and function they all belonged to essentially the same rank. While their names give a hint that they may have been nothing more than personifications of abstract ideals, they figure as personal beings. They may be said to represent the archangelic type, as being created servants of Ahura Mazda, though in the matter of worship and sacrifice they appear as sharers of divine honors. With their creator they were conceived to constitute the highest sphere of being. Yet it was but a wavering line which divided off this sphere. The priestly god Sraosha, the protector of the poor and the defenseless, and the efficient champion against the demons, attained substantially to the level of the six special associates of Ahura Mazda. In the later era of the Persian religion, Mithra, the god of heavenly light and the preserver of good faith, was awarded a position of great prominence. During the third and fourth centuries his cult was more largely patronized in the Roman Empire than that of any other Oriental divinity. It is thus seen that in the Persian or Zoroastrian religion we have beneath the overlord, Ahura Mazda, many divinities or semi-divinities, and no proper trinity.

The Greek religion, in its popular and poetic form, as dis-

tinguished from the religious platform embodied in the post-Socratic Greek philosophy, can not be said to have shown any particular affinity with the trinitarian conception. The overlord, Zeus, is represented as himself descended from an earlier generation of gods, and around and beneath him is depicted a crowd of divinities. The triad appears only as an unstable and accidental factor. In the Odyssey instances may be noticed of a special association of Zeus, Pallas, and Apollo. This may indicate that in the thought of the poet they were regarded as closely linked in their superintendence of the issues which he was contemplating. But his thought also paid tribute to Poseidon, and others. Moreover, it is to be noticed that in the Iliad antagonistic parts are assigned to the members of the triad just mentioned, since Pallas appears as the steadfast and ardent champion of the Greeks, while Zeus and Apollo lend their aid betimes to the beleaguered Trojans. In both of the great poems there is a plenty of incarnations in the sense of transient investments of divinities with human forms; but neither presents any proper counterpart to the trinitarian idea or to the Christian thought of the incarnation.

Much the same estimate is to be passed upon the triads of the Teutonic mythology as upon those contained in the popular form of the Greek religion. The grouping of three gods together, as, for instance, Thor, Odin, and Freyr, is undoubtedly of frequent occurrence. But very little significance is to be attached to the combination. "It is probably to be explained on the score of an enumeration of the chief gods, or of the coupling of the gods of various tribes and peoples."[1]

In India we meet with a somewhat closer approach to the trinitarian idea than is found in any of the religions thus far considered. This approach, however, belongs to a comparatively late epoch. The religion of the Vedic age—a naturalistic, mytho-poetic polytheism, modified here and there by a base of pantheistic thinking—placed no stress upon a threefold impersonation of the divine. Each god was raised in turn by the partiality of his devotees to the supreme place,

[1]De la Saussaye, the Religion of the Ancient Teutons, pp. 286, 287.

and was regarded as in a manner absorbing in himself the whole sum of divinity. Thus in the Rig-Veda one reads that Agni is Varuna, Indra; that in him are all the gods. This form of representation, in so far as it implies one personality under varied manifestations, may have borne a certain resemblance to a purely modalistic trinitarianism; but it differs even from this type of trinitarian doctrine in that there was no arrest at the number three. The combination of polytheistic and pantheistic postulates, upon which it reposed, permitted the assumption of any number of impersonations of the divine being; indeed, as appears in the Brahmanical philosophy, which came in to supplement the original Vedic teaching, each human personality could claim a substantial identity with the divine self.

The *trimurti* of later Hinduism was based in the same combination of polytheistic and pantheistic postulates which underlay the Vedic representation of multiplicity and unity. The polytheistic postulate was first operative. Vishnu and Siva, at the primary stage of development, were simply gods in a crowd of gods. But in course of time powerful sects became attached to each. Very naturally, sectarian zeal did not stop short of the most comprehensive claims. The devotees of Vishnu would not be content to assign to him any place below the highest. The same was true of the devotees of Siva. At length resort was made to the idea that the rival claims of the two great sectarian gods might be harmonized in the assumption that the two were after all substantially identical, being coequal manifestations of the one divine essence. Thus the conception of the godhead as susbsisting in a dual mode was reached. At this juncture there was no powerful sect to champion the distinctive claims of Brahma. But the traditional thought of Brahma as the all-god was still operative, and accordingly he was associated as an equal with Vishnu and Siva. Thus was constituted the Hindu *trimurti*. We have already cited the opinion of Lehmann, that it was introduced as a makeshift for blending together different cults, and that in the Hindu religion it has had only a minor significance for

faith or speculation (p. 226). It is to be noticed, furthermore, that in point of time it followed the formulation of the Christian doctrine of the Trinity. In this fact there is a suggestion of the possibility of borrowing; but there is no distinct warrant for turning the possibility into probability. "We do not believe," says Hopkins, "that the trinitarianism of India was derived from Christian sources. But it must be admitted to be historically possible that the creed of the Christians, known to the Hindus of the sixth and seventh centuries, may have suggested to the latter the idea of the trinity as a means of adjusting the claims of Brahmanism, Krishnaism [a popular form of Vishnuism] and Sivaism."[1] Whether indebted or not to the Christian dogma, Hindu trinitarianism, with its polytheistic and pantheistic premises, and its compounding of rival cults evidently differed to a very considerable degree from the catholic Christian doctrine of the Trinity.

In the latest Greek philosophy, the Neo-Platonic, ethnic speculation contributed a representation having a certain resemblance to the trinitarian dogma as held by catholic Christendom. To some extent a basis for this approximation was supplied by two of the preceding philosophies, Platonism and Stoicism. In the former the representation of the Ideas as supersensible realities, as the eternal pattern of the visible universe, as the unchanging source of all excellence and genuine being in the world, and as the sole medium of absolute knowledge, was well suited to furnish outlines of a Logos doctrine. That it was actually suggestive in this direction is shown by the acknowledgments of Philo and some of the early Christian fathers.[2] Besides furnishing in this way an historic ground for a Logos doctrine, Platonism gave a dim suggestion of a triad, in referring to *the good,* to a child begotten in his image,[3] and to a soul immanent to the world.[4] As respects

[1] E. W. Hopkins, The Religions of India, p. 545.

[2] Philo, De Monarchia, i. 6; Origen, Cont. Celsum, vi. 64; Clement of Alexandria, Strom. v. 3.

[3] Republic, Book vi.

[4] Timæus.

Stoicism, in its affirmation of a ruling principle, a cosmic reason, it made an approach to a Logos doctrine. Indeed the Stoics used the term Logos to designate this cosmic reason. In considerable part, however, the materialistic monism which colored their system, differenced their thought of the Logos both from the Christian idea included under that name and from the meaning which was attached to the middle term of the Neo-Platonic triad.

Plotinus, as representing the summit of Neo-Platonic speculation, is best taken as the expositor of the trinitarian idea which comes to expression in that speculation. At the head of his system stands the most transcendental notion that could possibly be framed. The first being, otherwise called by Plotinus the principle and the good, as well as God, is conceived as an impersonal infinite, absolutely undifferentiated, perfectly exclusive of everything which can suggest variety of content, and above every category which the speech of man supplies. To use some of the words of our philosopher: "The principle itself, as it is beyond intellect, so likewise is it beyond knowledge; but knowledge subsists in the nature which is next to this. For to know is one certain thing; but this principle is *one* without the addition of *certain*. For if it was a *certain one,* it would not be *the one itself*. For *itself* is prior to a *certain or some particular thing*. Hence it is in reality ineffable. For of whatever you speak, you speak of a certain thing. But of that which is beyond all things, and which is beyond even most venerable intellect, it is alone true to assert that it has not any other name [than the ineffable], and that it is not some one of all things. Properly speaking, there is no name of it, because nothing can be asserted of it. . . . We can say what it is not, but we can not say what it is, so that we speak of it from things posterior to it. . . . The good is not being; for being has, as it were, the form of the one. But that is formless, and is even without intelligible form. . . . God is something which is not essence, but beyond essence."[1]

[1]Enneads, V, iii, VI, ix. Thomas Taylor's translation.

As exalted above all distinctions, above the distinction between the knower and the known, above the distinction between being and will, the supreme entity can not entertain any purposes or produce aught by volitional activity. Nevertheless, according to Plotinus, production does occur. By an absolute necessity of nature the first being is a source of causal efficiency. His fullness, so to speak, overflows and spreads out into successive ranks of being, ranks decreasing in dignity and worth in proportion to their distance from the source. By this representation it is not meant that any partition of the substance of the first being is to be supposed. He remains eternally impartible and unmoved. The outgoing from him is purely dynamic, the forth-putting of energy or power. The different degrees in which his working is embodied or manifested in different beings determines their rank. Those which are remotest from the primary source, or have their content mediated through the largest number of intermediate links, stand lowest in the scale.[1]

The immediate product of this necessitated energizing of the first being is the νοῦς, or intellect, a timeless mind, absorbed in the contemplation of itself and of the first being, representative of the first stage in differentiation, since intellect, as contrasted with the absolute simplicity of the first being, includes both self and the knowledge of self.

Next to the νοῦς is the ψυχή, the cosmic soul, whence spring all the lesser orders of souls. It has its immediate source in the νοῦς, as the νοῦς has its source in the first being. "Just as external discourse," says Plotinus, "is an image of the discursive energy within the soul, after the same manner, soul, and the whole of its energy, are the discourse of intellect."[2]

Since the cosmic soul was regarded by Plotinus as separated by a very considerable interval from all ranks of being below its sphere, his system quite distinctly recognizes a triad. Indeed, in explicit opposition to contemporary Gnostics, with their long list of partial impersonations of the divine, he con-

[1]Compare Eduard Zeller, Die Philosophie der Griechen.

[2]Enneads, V, i.

tended that the list should enumerate only the first being, intellect, and soul. "This," he said, "is the order according to nature, neither to admit more nor fewer than these in the intelligible. For those who admit fewer than these must either say that soul and intellect are the same, or that intellect and that which is first are the same. It has, however, been frequently demonstrated by us that these are different from each other."[1]

From the exposition which has been given it follows that the triad of Plotinus, whatever analogy it may bear to the Trinity postulated by Christian teaching, differs from the same to a very appreciable degree. In so far as that teaching incorporates the idea of three co-ordinate Divine Persons, as has been to a considerable extent the case since the days of Augustine, no proper parallel is furnished in the triad of Plotinus, for in this the first being is placed high above the plane of the νοῦς and the ψυχή, these being considered as products of his dynamical working. If comparison be made with a form of Christian teaching which admits a more or less pronounced subordination of the Son and the Spirit, such a form as had place with some of the early fathers, and has also been favored by a considerable number of theologians in more recent times, the triad of Plotinus comes appreciably nearer to furnishing a parallel. But even in this case the distance between the Christian and the Neo-Platonic thought is not small. The first being, about whom Plotinus discourses, is far other, in his utterly abstract and impersonal character, than the Father acknowledged in the Christian system. The νοῦς of Plotinus, absorbed in a comtemplation which never descends below the plane of its own being, is far other than the eternal Word, who was made flesh and dwelt among us. Certain marks of resemblance may be admitted; but, on the whole, the contrasts between the Plotinian triad and the Christian Trinity are quite as noticeable as the points of similarity.

Since Plotinus wrote in the third century, the possibility that his thought may have been influenced to some extent by

[1]Enneads, II, ix.

Christian thinking must be conceded, just as the like possibility needs to be recognized in relation to those who formulated the Hindu conception of the *trimurti*. But judicial scholarship does not make much account of the possibility. As heir to the various phases of Hellenic philosophy, and as touched by the spirit of Oriental mysticism which was abroad in the Roman world of his day, Plotinus may have found sufficient incentive to represent the hierarchy of being as it appears in his system.

Our examination of the principal embodiments of ethnic thinking leads to the conclusion that only in Hinduism and in the later Greek philosophy do we find a noteworthy resemblance to the Christian conception of the Trinity, and that even in these two instances the resemblance can be affirmed only with important limitations.

To the above discussion of the trinitarian features of ethnic systems we subjoin two or three items explanatory of other matters that have received a passing reference.

The affirmation of large obligations on the part of the Koran to the Old Testament was not meant to imply that Mohammed drew directly from the writings of the Hebrews. There are good reasons for the conclusion that the Old Testament materials utilized in the Koran were appropriated through oral channels. Before reaching the hand of the Arabian prophet they had been mixed with much apocryphal matter. Stanley Lane-Poole estimates that about one-fourth of the Koran consists in legends derived from the Jewish Haggadah.

As respects the dualism ascribed to Zoroastrianism (p. 85), it is fair to observe that it is subject to a qualification in the eschatology of that system. In the ultimate issue, Ahura Mazda and his allies are to overthrow the powers of evil and darkness led by Angra Mainyu. Thus the ultimate supremacy of the good deity is provided for, though, of course, it needs to be granted that logically an inferior ground is furnished for this outcome by the representation of a divided power back of creation.

The ultra-ritualistic text which was cited from a Brahmanical source (p. 117), was designed to be taken as only partially representative; that is, representative of one side of the Brahmanical system. Texts of a contrary tenor doubtless occur within the extended literature of that system. What admits of being asserted is, that there is a strain of Brahmanical teaching which tends to sacrifice ethical values to an ultra-ritualistic standpoint. The repeated declaration, that the very gods are dependent for their supremacy upon sacrifices, finds here and there a congenial supplement in the ascription of a well-nigh limitless efficacy to certain rites.

III.

SCHOLASTIC REALISM.

It is well understood that "realism" in the scholastic sense is not antithetic to "idealism," but to "nominalism." It stands for the conclusion that we are not dealing with mere names or conventional signs when we mention "universals"—general terms, such as "wisdom," "man," "bird," "animal," "body," "color." In all instances of this kind, it holds, we are dealing with objective realities. To speak succinctly, scholastic realism has to do with the nature and function of universals, and represents an emphatic position in favor of their reality, their actual existence in an objective range or apart from the human mind engaged in contemplating them.

The mediæval scholastics found an historic basis for their realistic doctrine in Platonism, or in Aristotelianism, or in a combination of the two. As commonly understood, Plato was an advocate of the most emphatic and unqualified realism. Before the individuals of like name he placed the universal; before concrete entities, the ideas. He regarded the latter as eternal and imperishable archetypes, uniform, and self-identical realities; whereas, individual things belong to the sphere of mutation, and depend for the measure of reality which they do possess, as well as for their cognizability, upon participation

in the universal essences, the ideas. So Plato has been generally understood to have taught. Lotze makes the suggestion that Plato was badly served in this relation by the Greek language, as failing to afford suitable means of discrimination between "validity" and "subsistence;" that what he wished to insist upon was not the independent subsistence of ideas, but their unconditional validity—the fact of an ideal order or system which abides in its truth quite independent of any expression in the sphere of sensible and concrete reality, the perfect and unassailable integrity of thought-distinctions over against the flux characteristic of all finite things.[1] However, the verdict that Plato conceived of the ideas as substantial entities can claim a pretty good ground in the fact that a philosopher as near to him as Aristotle so judged, and also in the fact that historical critics as competent as Zeller, Erdmann, and others, have pronounced very decidedly for the same conclusion.

Aristotle repudiated the theory of the independent and substantial existence of universals. The individual alone, he maintained, is entitled to be called substance. A general name is a predicate-term, not a subject-term. It is significant of an attribute, or a complex of attributes, viewed as common to a greater or less number of individuals. There is no whiteness apart from individual white objects, and no humanity save in individual men. To name universals, therefore, is to express the common or resembling qualities of a plurality of objects. In this line of statements Aristotle seems to stand essentially on the basis of conceptualism, or the theory which makes universals expressive of concepts—mental representations of the common or (more strictly) similar in a plurality of objects. But, on the other hand, Aristotle made statements which were capable of being understoond in a sense approximating not a little to Platonic realism. With Plato he taught both that individuals are known in their essential character in and through universals, and that the objects of genuine knowledge must be supposed to be real. In this way, notwithstanding his ascription of substantiality solely to individuals, he gave

[1] Logik, pp. 501–506.

occasion to emphasize the superior reality of universals. A chance was afforded to one who was disposed to interpret Aristotle in favor of a somewhat stanch type of realism to do so without appearing to go far afield. If not fairly invited, this order of interpretation was not distinctly excluded. Platonism was undoubtedly the more congenial basis for a pronounced realism, but it could also find harborage among those who reckoned themselves disciples of Aristotle.

The essence of the Platonic doctrine came to be expressed in the formula *universalia ante rem,* while the characteristic feature of Aristotle's teaching in this relation was set forth in the formula *universalia in re.* These formulas may be accredited with a measure of propriety as applied to the respective ways of thinking of the two Greek philosophers. But evidently they are not fitted in themselves to serve as means of an accurate classification of realistic doctrine. It is necessary to inquire in what sense the universal is supposed to be prior to the individual thing, and in what sense it is supposed to be in the individual thing. As a matter of fact, pronounced realists in the Middle Ages had no objection to either formula. If they did not hold that universals are before the things in the manner of strictly independent entities, they did hold that they have a prior existence as the forms or patterns of things contained in the divine mind from eternity; and they were also agreed in maintaining that in an important sense they are in things. A discriminating exegesis must therefore look beyond the mere formula with which the teaching of a writer may have been associated.

It is commonly admitted that Erigena reproduced substantially the Platonic realism. He conceived of universals as real essences, superior in rank to individuals, logically prior to them, and containing the fundament of their being. As Ueberweg remarks, he seems to have hypostatized the *tabula logica,* making the degrees of abstraction to correspond with the degrees in the scale of real existence. A close approximation to the realistic teaching of Erigena was made by Anselm. He reproached contemporary nominalists for estimating *uni-*

versales substantias as mere words, and for showing themselves incapable of understanding by color anything distinct from body, or by wisdom anything distinct from the soul, being so merged in sense as to be disqualified from contemplating things sole and pure. He also represented the ideas which God thinks in the Logos as a veritable basis of the creature universe, the unchanging grounds of changing things, originals to which the things of the time-world but feebly correspond. Anselm did not indeed define his position very precisely, but such hints as he has given leave no reason to doubt that his thinking was emphatically of the realistic order. Among those who followed, William of Champeaux strongly asserted the objective reality of universals, and reduced individuals to the rank of accidental distinctions superinduced upon a common base. Fundamentally Socrates, Plato, and the rest, as he represented, are one and the same entity, the universal, humanity, which in manifestation is diversified by certain accidental forms or characteristics. In the list of emphatic realists may be mentioned also Odo of Cambrai, Bernard of Chartres, Walter of Mortagne, and William of Auvergne.

In the twelfth and thirteenth centuries there was somewhat of a tendency to curtail the realistic theory. This tendency may have been due in part to the growing ascendency of Aristotle in the thinking of that period. Abelard and John of Salisbury are understood to have espoused essentially the platform of conceptualism. Even such masters of orthodoxy as Albertus Magnus and Thomas Aquinas indulged in statements which make for conceptualism rather than for any type of realism. When the former said, *Non est universale nisi dum intelligitur*,[1] he was certainly very far from giving expression to a realistic tenet. Language that looks in the same direction may be found with Aquinas.[2] However, the teaching of Aquinas shows also traces of realistic leaven. For instance, in his theory of cognition he seems to assume in things, as in some

[1] Metaphys. Lib. v, tract. vi. cap. vii, cited by Hauréau, Histoire de la Philosophie Scolastique, ii, 325.

[2] Sum. Theol., Pars i, quaest. xliv, art. iii; Pars i, quaest. xlv, art. iv.

sense separable from their matter, a real existence of forms, that is, of universals in the sense of the realists. A fervent admirer thus construes the theory of the "angelic doctor" relative to the process of knowledge: "The thing effects by means of the image-like in itself, that is the thought element, its entrance into the inner world of images, that is the circle of our thinking. Through the species as an element in the being of the thing, which element is conformable to the soul, the subject [of cognition] is placed in the soul. The soul receives the foreign form without losing its own, and this is the pre-eminence of the cognitive being."[1]

Somewhat more fully than Aquinas, Duns Scotus and the Scotists paid tribute to realistic doctrine. It is true that on the one hand Scotus reproduced the Aristotelian stress upon the individual; but it is also true that he brought to the front the other side of Aristotle's teaching—his stress upon the two facts that individuals are known in their essential character through universals, and that the objects of knowledge must be supposed to be real. In construing this order of representation the "subtle doctor" seems to have assumed that, corresponding to the names of genera and species, there are objectively subsistent forms, prior in the order of generation to the individual, and constituting a nature which without detriment to its unity may be in any number of individuals. "Universal natures," says Stöckl in exposition of Scotist doctrine, "would exist, even if the understanding which thinks them should not exist. . . . Universal natures are constituted through the union of the generic and the specific form, and these forms present themselves to the understanding as objects located in nature itself, objects which are independent of the act of thinking on the part of the understanding."[2] Scotus may have said some things which look in the direction

[1] Otto Willman, Geschichte des Idealismus ii, 386, 387. The following is a part of the statement of Aquinas: Cognoscentia a non-cognoscentibus in hoc distinguuntur, quia non-cognoscentia nihil habent nisi formam suam tantum, sed cognoscens natum est habere formam etiam rei alterius; nam species cogniti est in cognoscente.

[2] Geschichte der Philosophie des Mittelalters, ii, 789.

of a modification of this decisively realistic teaching, but it must at least be admitted that realistic doctrine finds very congenial ground in his representations.[1]

In the fourteenth century a distinct revolt against realism was inaugurated by William Occam and his school. The Occamist teaching has been styled "nominalism;" but it is a fair question whether it would not be more justly denominated "conceptualism." For a time it ruled a good part of the ecclesiastical domain. Realism, however, was not effectually displaced. In a general view it appears as a prominent element in mediæval scholasticism. Even in quarters where it was not inculcated in the most open and unequivocal manner there was a tendency to admit more or less of its implications.

If now we inquire respecting the merits of the realistic doctrine which formed so conspicuous a factor in scholastic thinking, we are compelled to pronounce it philosophically unsound. There is absolutely no rational warrant for the real objective existence of universals, and all the analogies which are pertinent to the subject are distinctly opposed to such existence. Suppose there were in the mind of God from eternity generic and specific patterns of things to be made, what connection could these have had with real subsistence? Analogy would lead us to say, not a whit more connection than a rule of action has with the act which it forecasts, or a picture with the object which it represents. A man purposing to make clothespins and ball clubs naturally fashions in his mind patterns of these things. What relation in such a case do the patterns hold to the things? Just simply that of antecedent thought-forms. They stand for a purely subjective mental function. They are in the mind and of the mind, and can no more get out of the mind into the things in any real sense than a part of the mind can be cut off and inserted into a lump of matter. The things correspond in certain respects to the patterns, because the will uses the patterns as standards or

[1] Stöckl, Hauréau, and Willmann agree in the conclusion that in the Scotist formalism a very considerable approach was made to the Platonic hypostatizing of universals. Some other interpreters have understood Scotus in the sense of a less pronounced realism.

rules of action in making the things. In no proper sense are the mental patterns moved into the things, or made to reside in them, or to serve as a constitutive element of their being. The being of the things is due to the shaping, energizing will—the mental patterns serving simply as the rational antecedent, the governing rule for the agency of the will which effectuates the things. Such is the dictate of any analogy to which we can appeal. Out of the range of finite experience we can get no warrant whatever for the making of any supposed ideas or patterns in the divine mind anything more than rules of procedure for the creative divine will. For aught we know there may be in the divine mind ideas which serve as the rational antecedents of things; there may be even ideas of as general a cast as one may be pleased to imagine; but that these ideas enter literally into the being of things, or are to be credited with any sort of objective or extra-mental subsistence, with any subsistence other than purely conceptual, there is no reason to suppose. It is slipshod thinking which ignores or minifies the gulf between the mere notions of things and things themselves.

But it will be asked, is it not true, as Plato and Aristotle assumed, that individuals are known through universals, and that the objects of genuine knowledge must be supposed to be real? This is to be granted. If we look carefully, however, at the import of the facts in question, we shall find no justification therein of the realistic doctrine. To say that individuals are known through universals is simply to say that nothing is known in the way of absolute isolation, but rather in the way of connection or comparison with the known. Having on hand, as understood categories, such general or class terms as "animal," "rational," "volitional," "moral," "spiritual," "corporeal," "mortal," and "immortal," we proceed to define a given individual that is introduced to our attention by applying to the same these terms or as many of them as are suitable to the case. What does that signify? That the individual is veritably compounded of universals corresponding to the list of general terms mentioned? Nothing of the sort. It

signifies merely that the individual is capable of being viewed in class relations and is defined to our minds by being so viewed. Intrinsically he may be individual in every atom of his being; yet, if he has points of resemblance to other individuals, he can be set in relation to them on the score of these points of resemblance—in other words, be associated with them under class terms. The resemblances being real, the act of association or classification is not arbitrary, but correspondent to fact. The Platonic and Aristotelian propositions under consideration reduce, therefore, to this: The individual is defined to our thought by being viewed in class relations, and a genuine basis for so viewing him (or it) is supplied in his actual resemblances to other individuals. In the individual there is and can be nothing universal. Rationality in John is purely John's capacity for rational activity. But in so far as John is rational, he has a distinct resemblance to James and Nathan and the rest, and so in the comparing mind can be brought under a common designation with them. The universal is a matter of concept or mental representation. Conceptualism must be pronounced the true theory, it being at the same time understood that the concept expressed in a general term is not arbitrarily formed, but has respect to actual resemblances of individuals.

Using language with customary freedom, one may indeed speak of ideas as being immanent in things. As a matter of fact, philosophical writers who confess no allegiance to scholastic realism are not unaccustomed to define the continuous identity of changing things by saying that through all their changes they remain true to their immanent ideas. The language is excusable, but of course in strictness there are no ideas in the things. What is meant is that the shaping and conserving power back of things secures their conformity throughout their history to certain types or patterns.

Scholastic realism may be credited with a certain service in emphasizing the truth that knowledge rejects the isolation of its objects, and that in the great system of reality there are means for something more than an arbitrary association or

grouping of objects. In its characteristic tenet, however, it appropriated from antique philosophy products of immature thinking. The doctrine of the real existence of universals is an unmanageable figment. The theologian will exhibit wisdom in excluding from his system anything which rests upon the realistic postulate as a necessary basis.

IV.

THE THEORY OF A MERELY IDEAL PREËXISTENCE OF CHRIST.

Occasionally in recent times a writer on biblical topics has attempted to make over the doctrine of Christ's preëxistence into the theory of His prior subsistence simply in divine idea and purpose. The notion that the New Testament concedes any proper standing-ground to this theory belongs so unmistakably among the eccentricities of theological thinking that it calls for only a brief consideration. The substance of what needs to be urged may be presented under three or four heads, as follows:

1. The neutrality of the synoptical Gospels on the theme is not to be taken as proof that faith in a real preëxistence of Christ was not current among the apostles at a comparatively early period. The scope of those writings, attempting as they did a simple reproduction of the earthly career of the Messiah, narrowed quite distinctly the occasion to introduce the topic of preëxistence. Being allied with a theological rather than with a purely historical interest that topic stood aside from their controlling aim. Doubtless it might have been introduced in some reported word of the Master, and its absence can be taken as evidence that it did not figure prominently in His public utterances. But the non-appearance of an item in the brief and imperfect narratives of the first three evangelists is not a sure indication that it was not recognized implicitly or explicitly at one point or another in Christ's discourses. Much less is it a sure indication that it was not entertained in

the thought and conviction of the apostles at a relatively early stage. As the confession of Peter shows, even during the earthly life of Christ they had reached the conception that in an extraordinary sense He was the Son of God. The resurrection and the marvelous display of divine power on the day of pentecost mightily reinforced that conception. Thinking thus of Christ as in an extraordinary sense the Son of God, they evidently were in close mental conjunction with the idea of His personal preëxistence. That this idea was actually embraced and held by them is strongly evidenced by the contemporary teaching of Paul—a teaching perfectly unequivocal, as will be shown presently, in its assumption of real preëxistence. Even if Paul had possessed the boldness to sound a dissenting christological note in the presence of those who had been the personal companions of Christ,[1] it is not probable that he would have treated the doctrine of preëxistence as an accepted postulate, needing no word of commendation, had he been conscious of standing apart in this matter from the apostolic brotherhood. The sober inference is that by the middle years of the first century, and probably at an earlier point, the thought of Christ's personal preëxistence had the right of way among the responsible teachers of the Church, including those who were the principal channels for transmitting the history contained in the synoptical Gospels.

2. So plainly do the Epistles of Paul, the Epistle to the Hebrews, and the Apocalypse assume the real preëxistence of Christ that exegesis goes on a fool's errand when it attempts

[1] Too much account is not to be made of Paul's declaration to the Galatians that he received his gospel by revelation, as though this statement was designed to cover the whole range of Christian doctrine. Doubtless what the apostle meant to assert was his indubitable conviction of a divine commission to proclaim to the Gentiles a message, or "gospel," of grace and emancipation, as opposed to a scheme of legal bondage. To read into his words a wholesale affirmation of dogmatic independence is entirely unwarrantable. In this same epistle Paul has informed us that early in his Christian course he took pains to have a fifteen days' conference with Peter; and in other connections he has given evidence of a disposition to consult the primitive Christian tradition. (1 Cor. vii. 10; xi. 23; xv. 4–7.)

to reduce their teaching to the thought of a merely ideal preëxistence. Take the words of Paul in Phil. ii. 5-8, descriptive of recession from a divine form to the form of a servant. Is it to be supposed that the apostle could have imagined that a description of that sort could be made to fit an abstraction? He was evidently endeavoring to picture the maximum instance of the spirit of self-renunciation, and he found that instance in the voluntary exchange, by the Son of God, of an estate of glory for an estate of humiliation. On the theory of nothing but an ideal preëxistence the incarnation could have expressed absolutely no thought, volition, or purpose of its subject, and so, of course, could not rationally be used to exhibit Him as an example of the spirit of self-renunciation. No more can the same theory be made to harmonize with the parallel representation in 2 Cor. viii. 9. Surely Paul could never have dreamed of picturing any transition in the earthly life of Christ as an exchange of wealth for poverty. The obscure home in Nazareth was no palace of luxury. The apostle's representation is pithless save on the assumption that a heavenly estate preceded the earthly lot of Christ. Quite as little does Paul's language satisfy any rational demand of speech, if it be concluded that his thought admitted only a conceptual preëxistence in the mind of God when he said of Christ: "In Him were all things created, in the heavens and upon the earth, things visible and things invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers; all things have been created through Him and unto Him; and He is before all things, and in Him all things consist."[1] Passages testifying with equal distinctness to faith in real preëxistence are contained in the Epistle to the Hebrews;[2] and the Apocalypse gives an unmistakable indication of the like belief.[3]

A token that a fair exegesis can not escape the conclusion contended for above, is found in the fact that critics who pay scanty respect to the trinitarian dogma are very positive in maintaining that the assumption of the real preëxistence of

[1]Col. i. 15–17.

[2]Heb. i. 2, 3; x. 5–7.

[3]Rev. i. 17, 18; iii. 14; xxii. 13.

Christ underlies this whole list of writings. Here belong such New Testament scholars as Holtzmann and Pfleiderer.[1] Especially worthy of notice is the admission of Beyschlag. Though minded to attenuate as far as possible the scriptural testimony to a real preëxistence of Christ, he was compelled to grant that several of the New Testament writers, being imperfectly schooled in the distinction between conceptual and real existence, predicated the latter of the pre-incarnate Christ. "Paul thinks," he says, "of a real intermediate being between God and the world, in whom the world already exists in possibility, the firstborn of every creature, in whom all things were created."[2] The same point of view he finds represented also in the Apocalypse and the Epistle to the Hebrews. "The author of the Apocalypse," he says, "like Paul and the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews, regarded Christ as a preëxistent intermediate being between God and the world, God and humanity, related to ὁ θεός as his unique image, and to the world and humanity as a personal archetype, and who, after mediating the creation of the world, appeared among His brethren in the fullness of the times as a child of man and offspring of David, in order to gain an eternal kingship over them as Saviour by His life, death, and resurrection—in a word, the author of the Apocalypse united the Logos idea with the idea of Messiah realized in Jesus."[3] In consideration of the very pronounced dogmatic preferences of Beyschlag, these words must be regarded as a striking tribute to the compelling force of New Testament data.

3. There is reason for concluding that the same thought of preëxistence which is mirrored in the Pauline Epistles, the Epistle to the Hebrews, and the Apocalypse was back of the composition of the First Epistle of Peter. This is the judgment of Holtzmann, Pfleiderer, and Von Soden. The lan-

[1] H. J. Holtzmann, Lehrbuch der neutestamentlichen Theologie II. 81–87, 251–253, 296, 297; I. 469–472. Otto Pfleiderer, Der Paulinismus, pp. 111–117. Das Urchristenthum, pp. 349, 350, 630–633.

[2] New Testament Theology, ii. 84.

[3] New Testament Theology, ii. 380.

guage of the epistle, it may be granted, is not very explicit, but it is certainly suggestive of something more than an ideal preëxistence. Christ is described as one "who was foreknown indeed before the foundation of the world, but was manifested at the end of the times for your sake."[1] Now manifestation is most naturally affirmed of a subject conceived to be already existing in an invisible sphere. There is therefore a hint here that the author thought of a preëxistent Christ, and this hint is supported by the representation, in a preceding verse (i. 11), that the spirit of Christ wrought in the Old Testament prophets.

4. With the same distinctness as the Pauline Epistles, the fourth Gospel teaches the real preëxistence of Christ. No one could have written as the author of that Gospel wrote except under the motive-power of a positive and unwavering belief in the real preëxistence of his Lord. Observe the manifold ways in which this belief is evidenced. The Word which was in the beginning and universally operative in the work of creation is declared to have become flesh and to have dwelt among men. John the Baptist is represented as saying of the Christ, "He was before me." Of Himself Christ affirmed: "No man hath ascended into heaven but He that descended out of heaven, even the Son of Man which is in heaven." "He that cometh from above is above all. . . . What He hath seen and heard of that He beareth witness." "The bread of God is He that cometh down out of heaven, and giveth life unto the world." "Not that any man hath seen the Father, save He which is from God He hath seen the Father." "What then if ye shall behold the Son of Man ascending where He was before." "Before Abraham was I am." "Glorify me with Thine own self, with the glory which I had with Thee before the world was."[2]

The collective force of these statements is simply invincible, and one and another of them taken separately make a sorry task for the critic who would eliminate the thought of real

[1] 1 Peter i. 20. Compare Heb. ix. 26.

[2] John i. 1-14, 16, 30; iii. 13, 31, 32; vi. 33, 46, 62; viii. 58; xvii. 5.

preëxistence from the fourth Gospel. For instance, how on the supposition of a purely ideal preëxistence can Christ be said to have dealt honestly with the Jews in making such an affirmation as is recorded in viii, 58? His Jewish interrogators understood a preceding statement to imply logically that He was contemporary with Abraham. Instead of correcting their inference He approved it, or rather transcended it by explicitly affirming an antiquity superior to that of Abraham. Who can imagine that the evangelist designed to represent Him in this saying as merely throwing dust in the eyes of His opponents, by using terms in a sense foreign to the occasion? Again, it is quite over-taxing to expel the thought of a real preëxistence from xvii, 5. It has been alleged, indeed, that inasmuch as Christ asks for glorification as a reward for the faithful fulfillment of His mission, it could not have been His by right of original position. But this reasoning rests upon an arbitrary premise. Nothing in the context enforces the conclusion that Christ asks for glorification simply and solely as a reward for fidelity. In His perfect filial submission He recognized that the times and the seasons were in the Father's hand. It seemed to Him that His work was approaching a consummation, so that soon the state of humiliation might properly give place to the state of exaltation. Very naturally, therefore, He gave expression to the aspiration by which His spirit was upborne. So far from standing in the way of His confident request, the perfection of His title to heavenly glory gave all the freer scope to His communion with the Father respecting His investment with that glory. Once more, it has been urged that the glory to which Christ looked may be compared to the treasure reserved in heaven for believers, or to the kingdom prepared for the faithful from the foundation of the world; and that consequently it is only a conceptual preëxistence with which we are here confronted. But this way of arguing overlooks the broad difference between the things brought into comparison. It is one thing to conceive of a treasure, a sphere of glory, a heavenly kingdom, as *standing ready* for foreordained subjects. It is another thing to say of a given subject

that he *possessed* or *enjoyed* that glory or that kingdom before the world was. A statement of the latter order is never made in the New Testament respecting God's redeemed children. Christ's reference to a glory which He had with the Father before the world was stands apart from and in antithesis to any scriptural language ever applied to the simple human heir to a prepared estate.

The general plea that personification was congenial to the Jewish mind of that era, and that a Platonizing estimate of ideas was rife, has far too little weight to offset the concurring representations in the fourth Gospel which speak for faith in real personal preëxistence. Writers of the first century were not blind to the distinction between preëxistence in idea and preëxistence in fact. If some of them did not always make as wide a chasm between the two as subsists in our thought, they were still cognizant of the difference between the mere idea of a person and the actual person.[1] No known fact in any wise authorizes us to think that a writer, as self-consistent as was the author of the fourth Gospel in the use of language adapted to picture real preëxistence, meant to picture anything less.

V.

SOME ETHICO-RELIGIOUS QUESTIONS.

I. Marriage and Divorce.

A LIFE-UNION of one man with one woman is unmistakably the biblical ideal of marriage. In the Old Testament, it is true, a degree of tolerance is manifest for polygamy. But this tolerance is quite another thing than positive approbation. The reflective thought and higher religious feeling of the ancient oracles unequivocally favor monogamy. The first man is represented as provided by divine arrangement with a single spouse, and the divinely initiated plan for him is set forth as a model for all time, the description in the given connection implying that the conjugal bond in general means the union of one man with one woman. In the wisdom literature every

[1] Compare Dalman, The Words of Jesus, p. 299.

reference to the domestic ideal implies monogamy, and the same may be said of the whole body of the prophetical literature. Unless, then, one is minded to magnify the tolerated exception, and to overlook the ideal which emerges from the Old Testament religion as a whole, he can find no substantial basis for polygamy in the ancient oracles.

The teaching of the New Testament contemplates no other form of the marriage relation than that of monogamy. Its whole point of view is perfectly conformable to the words in which Christ summed up the essential import of the institution of marriage, "they twain shall become one flesh."[1] Moreover the premium which the New Testament places upon the ethical as opposed to mere physical preëminence, the crown which it awards to the virtues in which women are indubitably equal sharers with men, its declaration that artificial distinctions are abolished through Christ—all this is utterly incompatible with the signal disparagement and degradation of women which are inseparable from polygamous customs. A civilization rationally based in the New Testament could not fail to reckon monogamy among the simple decencies. It inevitably becomes the ideal as the barbaric deification of physical force recedes. Nothing but the barbaric standard could ever sanction a régime which makes woman the victim of man's caprice, and places her under the odious liability of being compelled to take up with a fraction of a husband.

If the biblical revelation as a whole enforces the monogamous ideal, it also makes strongly for the integrity and permanence of the marriage relation. A very considerable degree of facility for divorce may have been granted to the husband under the Old Testament régime. But in the New Testament the point of view is quite accordant with the best prophetical sentiment as it comes to expression in the words of Malachi, "I hate putting away, saith the Lord, the God of Israel" (ii. 16). Christ took pains to characterize the license granted under the Mosaic legislation as an accommodation to

[1]Matt. xix. 5, 6; Mark x. 8.

abnormal conditions, and plainly indicated that under the new order which He was commissioned to introduce a closer adhesion to the ideal of marriage as a life-union must be maintained. According to the report of His words in Mark and Luke, He made no provision whatever for divorce.[1] In Matthew's text,[2] on the other hand, He grants a single ground of divorce, namely, πορνεία, fornication, illicit connection of the wife (or husband) with a third party. This ground of exception makes it impossible to claim biblical authority for an absolute prohibition of divorce. One may indeed make the critical conjecture that the second and third evangelists give the truer version of our Lord's teaching; but a conjecture which is incapable of verification can not nullify the virtue of the fact that one of the evangelists places Christ on record as admitting a ground of divorce. The certain assurance which alone would justify an appeal to His authority for a total exclusion of divorce is under the historical conditions unattainable. And by divorce in Matthew's sense must be understood an absolute separation, with the right, at least of the innocent party, to remarry. Roman Catholicism, it is true, attempts to reconcile with Matthew's statement its own prohibition of all absolute dissolution of marriage by making a distinction between separation *quoad vinculum* and separation *quoad thorum,* and construing Matthew's text as legitimating only the latter. But this is a refinement entirely foreign to the conditions under which the words of Christ were uttered. To Jewish minds "the putting away" (ἀπολύειν) could mean nothing less than the abrogation of the existing marriage. That the form of statement conveyed, or was meant to convey, any thought of separation merely as to cohabitation, there is no reason to suppose.

While the Gospels mention only one valid ground of divorce, the words of Paul in 1 Cor. vii, 15 can be understood as admitting a second. He says that where the unbelieving

[1]Mark x. 5–12. Luke xvi. 18,

[2]Matt. v. 32; xix. 9.

(or non-Christian) partner is unwilling to live with the believing partner, a separation may ensue by the withdrawal of the unbelieving partner. "The brother or the sister is not under bondage in such cases." It may be contended, indeed, that Paul did not in this relation contemplate absolute divorce, that he meant to teach, not that the deserted partner should be free to contract a new marriage, but that this partner should not be burdened with the task of trying to keep up a practical union in face of the known purpose and deed of the deserting partner. This may be a possible interpretation, but it is not the more natural one. It is placed at a discount by the obvious powerlessness of the deserted party to keep up the union. Those addressed by Paul hardly needed to be told that they were not under bondage to attempt the impossible. Then, too, a comparison with Rom. vii. 2 ff. suggests that the "not being under bondage" meant in the mind of the apostle a possible release equivalent to that resulting from the death of the unbelieving partner. Perhaps the apostle found a reason for not being more specific as to the rights of the deserted partner in the fact that the temper and conduct of the deserter might involve different degrees of hopelessness as to the possibility of reconciliation. This much, then, results from the data: There is no means of establishing the conclusion that Paul admitted only one ground of divorce, and the probability is on the side of the supposition that he counted desertion, under conditions giving no rational hope of remedy, as an adequate ground.

If this contention holds, it is difficult to escape the path taken by many eminent exegetes and writers on ethics, who prefer to see in the gospel precept on this theme a general principle rather than a clearly defined law. We are directed to the conclusion that it was not so much the intention of Christ to limit divorce absolutely to the specific ground of marital infidelity, as to impress the truth that nothing short of a willful abuse of the marriage relation so extreme as to nullify its purpose and to be practically intolerable, nothing that could not rationally be regarded as the equivalent of the contempt

expressed for the marriage bond by adultery, could justify its dissolution.[1]

Of course the individual Christian ought to count himself obligated to the highest ideal. He cannot consistently enter the marriage relation without purposing to cultivate a charity which is ready to endure all things short of complicity in that which is repugnant to the law of God. The ecclesiastical standard, as governing those who confess obligation to a common faith, may properly approximate to that which is enthroned in the conscience of the enlightened Christian. The ecclesiastical body, however, has to consult for the total religious and moral good of its members, and so will need to consider very seriously whether a rigor which is most worthy of the election of the individual can be enforced throughout a given constituency with favorable results. When it comes to the more complex sphere of the State, the demand for serious consideration of the general outcome is increased. Lax divorce laws are undoubtedly instruments of social corruption, very decidedly prejudicial to the dignity of the family. But, on the other hand, law has no omnipotence in itself to create domestic virtue, and extra rigor in maintaining the indissolubility of marriage may enlarge the temptation to certain forms of criminality. The legislator, dealing with a heterogeneous mass, many of whom confess allegiance neither to biblical nor to ecclesiastical authority, will need to consider not merely what would be the rule in an ideal society, but also what under the existing conditions is feasible and likely to be promotive of social health and purity.

II. Sunday Observance.

The relation of Sunday observance to any sabbatical institution in pre-Mosaic time falls rationally out of consideration, since there is no substantial evidence of the existence of such

[1]Compare Köstlin, Christliche Ethik, pp. 606, 607; Martensen, Christian Ethics, Social, pp. 42-44; Dorner, System of Christian Ethics, pp. 540–545; Bowne, Principles of Ethics, p. 239; Newman Smyth, Christian Ethics, pp. 413, 414; Pateson, Hasting's Dict. of the Bible, III. 275, 276.

an institution. Doubtless the division of time into intervals of seven days was more or less current in remote antiquity, being readily suggested by the phases of the moon. It had a certain recognition among the Babylonians, and very likely also among the forefathers of the Hebrew nation. But of a day distinctly sabbatical in character and hedged about by religious sanctions the Bible gives us no information in connection with the period in question. It is stated indeed that in the thought of God a ground for hallowing the seventh day was furnished in the fact of rest from the work of creation on that day; but it is not stated that this divine thought was made a ground for any immediate publication of an obligation to keep holy the seventh day, and there is no hint of such publication having occurred before the exodus of the Hebrews from Egypt. A distinct sabbatical institution, which is capable of being regarded as an antecedent of the Christian's Sunday or Lord's-day, first meets us on the field of biblical history in the Mosaic age. There is no possibility of gaining any substantial biblical basis for Sunday observance in any law or requirement back of that age. This conclusion holds good entirely apart from revised views of the composition of the Pentateuch.

As respects the bearing of the fourth commandment in the decalogue upon Sunday observance two extreme views need to be avoided. On the one hand is the view which assigns to the fourth commandment the value of a perpetual law or statute. This is plainly untenable from the Christian standpoint. The fourth commandment requires the observance of the seventh day of the week. Christians do not, and from the beginning have not, with inconsiderable exceptions, observed that day. Thus immemorial Christian custom testifies to the absence of a proper legal or statutory character in the fourth commandment under the Christian dispensation, unless indeed the Christian body has been continuously guilty of law-breaking. It has sometimes been thought that the charge of law-breaking can be avoided, and at the same time a legal force be conserved to the fourth commandment, by resorting to the assumption of authoritative amendment. The apostles, it is

urged, under divine guidance changed the day, setting over, so to speak, the fourth commandment from the seventh onto the first day. The trouble with this assumption is that it is thoroughly arbitrary and fanciful. Not only is it without positive warrant; it is distinctively contradictory to the historical data, as will appear from the following facts: (1.) The apostolical literature makes no association between the Jewish Sabbath and the first day of the week which was honored by the early Christians in memory of the resurrection of their Lord. An epistle like that to the Hebrews, with all its alertness to relate Old Testament symbols to New Testament realities, affirms no relation between the Sabbath and the Christian day. The symbolical import which it attaches to the Jewish day is given another connection. (2.) Apostolic authority in relation to the Gentile world is on record as treating the Old Testament law, not as amended, but as inapplicable or non-existent. The Council of Jerusalem in its enumeration of ancient requirements which Gentile converts ought to observe makes no mention of the Sabbath law. Paul in his epistles takes pains to teach that Christians are not amenable to the Sabbath law of the Jews,[1] and he does this without interposing a single hint that another day than the seventh had fallen heir to its legal claims. The whole tenor of his reference to the subject shows the preposterous nature of the assumption of a formal apostolic amendment of the fourth commandment. (3.) In the patristic literature of the first three centuries no sort of an appeal is made to the fourth commandment as a sanction for the special observance of the first day of the week. This day is treated as an independent day, and in some instances care is taken to affirm its independent standing.[2]

It may be noticed that if the facts of apostolic and post-apostolic history disprove the supposition of an authoritative amendment of the fourth commandment, they are equally ad-

[1]Gal. iv. 9, 10; Rom. xiv. 5, 6; Col. ii. 16.

[2]Ignatius, Ad Magnes. viii, ix; Epistle of Barnabas, xv; Justin, Dial. cum. Tryph. xviii, xix; Irenæus, Cont. Haer. iv. 16; Tertullian, Adv. Judæos iv., Adv. Marc. v. 4.

verse to the retention of the fourth commandment in its unamended form as obligating to the observance of the seventh day. The unavoidable inference from these facts is that for Gentile Christianity the fourth commandment was treated in the apostolic and post-apostolic age as no longer binding. Only by an uncritical blending of dispensations and by a contravening of the tenor of primitive Christian history can the advocates of seventh-day observance obtain any standing-ground.

The contention that the fourth commandment must be regarded as perpetually binding because it forms part of a moral code is too superficial to deserve more than a passing word. Nobody has been assured by competent authority that the decalogue in its entirety is a moral code. Content rather than place determines the nature of a law, and judged by its contents the fourth commandment is not properly a moral law. It was not treated as such by the apostles. It is not asserted to be such by the moral sense of men. Nobody blames the heathen for not having observed it. Nobody knows that it is binding on heavenly society. Nobody knows that it specifies just the exact portion of time as an interval of rest which the weal of each individual demands, the fact being that the needs of individuals differ widely. It is far from being characterized by the certainty and uniformity of application which distinguish a moral law proper. Plainly it belongs in the field of utility as something well suited to the average needs of men, among things auxiliary to moral ends, but not in itself entitled to be counted a part of the moral law.

The other extreme to which reference was made consists in denying to the fourth commandment any significance for Christians except such as may belong to it simply as a relic of antiquity. This is intemperately and unwisely disparaging. The fourth commandment is indeed gone as a statute. But as infolding in itself a great lesson it abides. Teaching emphatically the need of a recurring day of rest and religious meditation for Israel, it teaches by implication the need of such a day for all mankind. In terms of perfect sobriety and fidelity to history we might say of the fourth commandment, as respects

its permanent function, it has the worth of a great historical precedent providentially designed to supply the general model of the Christian week and to teach impressively the need of a recurring day of rest and worship.

What has been said prepares for a statement of the valid grounds of Sunday observance. They are chiefly the following: (1.) The Old Testament law taken in the character of a potent historical precedent as defined above. (2.) New Testament fact, namely, the signalizing of Sunday as the special day of Christians from the start, the day of religious assemblies,[1] the day characterized by a holy significance, insomuch that in a New Testament writing it is already termed the Lord's-day.[2] It is not proved that in fact or by apostolic requirement it was treated at first as a strictly sabbatic day. While the Church had no control over the civil legislation, it would have involved special embarrassment to prohibit all secular engagements on Sunday to Christian converts. The tenor of post-apostolic history unmistakably favors the conclusion that the prohibition of Sunday labor was an offshoot of the sacred character attached to the day. First the day was accounted sacred on the score of its lofty and cheering associations; and then naturally, as the conditions of the empire became agreeable to the Christian interest, the sacredness of Sunday was guarded by the prohibition of such labors as tended to lower it to the plane of other days. (3.) The intrinsic propriety of commemorating the crowning event of the gospel history—the resurrection of our Lord. In that event the New Testament day obtains a sanction far more significant and inspiriting than that cited for the Old Testament day. (4.) The inference from reason and long-continued experience that men, in the period of earthly toil and discipline, as physical and as spiritual beings, as individuals and as members of communities, need a day which in the whole tenor of its conditions speaks of rest and divine communion.

As respects the keeping of the day, it is impossible to give an exact measure of personal or corporate obligation. The

[1] 1 Cor. xvi. 1, 2. [2] Rev. i. 10.

thoughtful Christian will consider not merely what his conscience may permit to himself individually considered, but also the demands of wholesome influence upon others. On the one hand, he will not place a premium upon enforced dullness; on the other, he will wish to guard the day of specially sacred associations from the fuss, tumult, and burden of the ordinary secular day. With the legislator the same motive may properly be effective which is conspicuous in the Deuteronomic version of the fourth commandment.[1] A well devised Sunday law safeguards to the laborer the respite which the greed of capital too often stands ready to snatch away from him. Such a law is legitimated by the same humanitarian interest which places legal restriction on the number of hours composing a working-day. It is justified also as contributing to the needful opportunity for that moral and religious training upon which the health of communities and the perpetuity of states is intimately dependent.

III. Temperance.

One who looks for a radical temperance platform in the *letter* of the Scriptures is likely to be disappointed. They contain indeed emphatic censures upon all excess in the use of intoxicating beverages;[2] but entire abstinence is not formally enjoined and at most receives an appreciative mention in connection with the Nazarites and Rechabites.[3] The general impression conveyed by the sum total of scriptural references is that in the age of either Testament not so much wine-drinking in itself, as excess in wine-drinking, was counted a grave fault. This impression, it is true, might be revised in favor of a more stringent point of view, if it could be shown that the Scriptures take pains to distinguish between fermented and unfermented wine, speaking uniformly of the former in terms of disparagement, and confining all tolerant and friendly references to the

[1] Deut. v. 14, 15.

[2] Prov. xx. 1; xxiii. 29–35; Isa. v. 11, 12; xxviii. 1, 3, 7; Eph. v. 18; Titus ii. 3; 1 Thess. v, 6–8.

[3] Num. vi. 1–4; Amos ii. 11, 12; Jer. xxxv.

latter. But this cannot be done. While the name of "wine" appears to be used with sufficient latitude to include the unfermented juice of the grape, no close discrimination is made between one kind of wine and another, and any one who attempts such discrimination runs a very serious risk of substituting imagination and personal preference for facts. It lies beyond the province of any exegete to determine that in a given instance of a simple reference to the use of wine the term denotes nothing but the unfermented product of the grape. The most that can be said with certainty is that the biblical wines, as deriving their strength from no other source than fermentation, were mild in comparison with much of the doctored wine of these later days.

While thus the letter of the Scriptures cannot be appealed to in behalf of an obligation to entire abstinence from spirituous beverages, one has no sort of need to go begging for proofs of such an obligation. There is placed before the men of this generation such a picture of waste and ruin resulting from the drink habit as never met the vision of the biblical writers. They saw indeed something of the mischief wrought by the use of intoxicants, but all that they witnessed was but a tame incident compared to the tragedy which runs through our civilization and threatens to cover increasing areas of horror and distress. Duty for the modern man must take its measure from a sane consideration of this tragedy. In the face of such a tremendous issue he does not need to wait for the discovery of a literal injunction in oracles written under conditions much less acute and tragic. He needs only principles and readiness of heart to apply them according to the rational dictates of the situation. And of principles suited to this subject there is no deficit in the Bible. On the one hand, the high calling of every man in Christ Jesus is a mighty protest against needless exposure to personal wreckage and slavery under the drink habit. On the other hand, the requirement of brotherly consideration for those who by temperament and inheritance are very seriously exposed to the curse of intemperance ought to be a most potent summons to self-denying abstinence, even if no personal

hazard should come into the account. When one reflects upon the subtle and penetrating power of example there surely needs to be no halting inference in his mind as respects the duty of entire abstinence. What the apostle said about the use of meat, which in the view of scrupulous persons might seem to be profaned by its associations,[1] any serious witness of the drink plague may well feel compelled to say, with no less emphasis, respecting the use of a thing so intrinsically doubtful as an intoxicating beverage.

Obligation as to personal habit and the attitude of the citizen toward the traffic in spirituous liquors are things by no means indifferently related. But when it comes to restrictive and proscriptive measures, the practical man will consider what there is reasonable hope of accomplishing at one stage and what must wait for a later stage. He will find it impossible to ignore the claims of a wise opportunism. An abstract logic may cry out that, inasmuch as the liquor traffic is fearfully bad, a vote for anything less than immediate extirpation involves sinful compromise and truckling to iniquity. But the adequate vote comes only through education, and when it comes the enactment to which it is instrumental has permanent virtue only through a public conscience continuously keyed up to a high pitch. Measures that overreach the existing degree of preparation incur considerable hazard of harmful reactions. It may be a shame for Christian communities to be so slow in the work of preparation; but the goal cannot be reached without a thorough discharge of the task of preparation; and that means the formation of great constituencies thoroughly permeated with stanch temperance sentiment. In the natural order ecclesiastical tuition, influence, and restraint must be expected to march in advance of civil legislation. An efficient support to temperance legislation would indeed be secured if labor organizations should universally gird themselves for a firm, united, and persistent war against the drink curse. But the superior burden of responsibility for the sustentation of a vital and potent temperance sentiment rests upon the great Christian

[1] 1 Cor. viii. 13; Rom. xiv. 15.

communions. This responsibility they cannot shirk without discounting their vocation to serve as leading instrumentalities for the practical realization of the divine kingdom. When all the great Churches have fulfilled the demands of a sane temperance zeal within the bounds of their several constituencies, the outlook for effective action by the State will have a fair degree of promise.[1]

[1]On the general theme see Daniel Dorchester, The Liquor Problem in All Ages; Alex Gustafson, The Foundation of Death; Norman Kerr, Wines, Scriptural and Ecclesiastical.

REVIEW SCHEME.

Part I.

CHAPTER I.

I.

1. The ineptness of any unqualified declaration of the impossibility of knowledge. 2. Reasons for concluding that a unitary psychical agent is a necessary presupposition of knowledge.

II.

1. Difficulties incurred by radical sensationalism through its denial of the unitary agent. 2. Illustration of the shortcomings of sensationalism as afforded in John Stuart Mill's admission. 3. Illustration afforded by various incongruities in Herbert Spencer's teaching.

III.

1. The necessity of assuming real agency or activity in the attainment of knowledge. 2. Kant's way of recognizing this subjective factor in knowledge, or his doctrine of the categories. 3. The two factors determining the appearances of things.

IV.

Reasons for concluding that certainty of knowledge is not seriously interfered with by the unavoidable intrusion of a subjective factor.

V.

1. Kant's position on the question whether the categories, or constitutional view-points, have objective validity; in other words, whether there is that outside of the thinking subject which corresponds to them. 2. Reasons for criticising the Kantian position

relative to this topic. 3. The question whether it is allowable to admit distinctions among the categories as respects objective validity. 4. The difficulties incident to the claim for the objective reality of space. 5. Difficulties belonging to the supposition of the objective reality of time. 6. The rule which, in the face of these difficult questions, is adapted to secure intellectual confidence. 7. The highest available criterion of the truth of notions.

VI.

1. The connection which the thought of the objective validity of the categories has with the supposition that the world is adjusted to reason. 2. A special subjective ground for faith in the rationality of the world-system.

VII.

1. Importance, for cognition, of the subject-matter supplied by inner states and experiences (such as are not directly dependent upon sense-perception). 2. Illustration of how the consciousness of volitional energy supplies a basis for rational inference. 3. Illustration of how the experience of certain orders of feelings may provide a ground for highly important inductions. 4. Cautions which need to be observed in attempts to utilize the feelings for the ends of knowledge or valid doctrinal construction. 5. Statement and criticism of Schleiermacher's theory of the function of feeling in religion. 6. The proper conception of the relation between morality (taken in the broad sense) and religion.

VIII.

1. Estimate of the actual force of historical connections in determining beliefs, and of the benefit resulting from this method of furnishing an outfit to each succeeding generation. 2. The conditions under which, and the extent to which, long-continued persistence of an idea gives it a title to acceptance. 3. The important bearing of a moral element on the attitude toward the historical deposit.

IX.

1. Considerations which may be urged against the necessity of taking a revelation, or collection of oracles, as a strict unity.

2. The prerogative which, from this point of view, must be accredited to reason in judging the contents of a revelation. 3. Summary of points on the province of reason in relation to revelation. 4. The cardinal error of the old Deistic speculation on the relation of reason to revelation.

X.

The way in which the idea of God has an important bearing on rational certainty.

CHAPTER II.

I.

Considerations which justify the making of the theme of the divine existence antecedent to that of revelation.

II.

1. Definition of the terms "person" and "infinite" as applied to God. 2. The mistake involved in denying personality to God in the interest of His greatness. 3. Statement and refutation of the objection to the personality of the Infinite which is based on the supposed requirements of self-consciousness.

III.

1. Reasons for reducing the list of anti-theistic theories, which call for formal attention, to materialism and pantheism. 2. Points of contrast between materialism and pantheism; points of similarity.

IV.

1. Illustration of the fact that materialism is not distinguished by the narrow range of its necessary assumptions. 2. Illustration of the large assumptions characteristic of pantheistic systems. 3. Conclusion as to the test which these systems must meet if they are to earn any valid title to supplant theistic faith.

V.

1. The failure of materialism, whether of the ordinary or of the mystical type, to construe the facts of cognition. 2. Other grounds

of objection to materialism. 3. Extent to which monism can properly be associated with materialism. 4. Criticism of the monistic theory as presented by Romanes. 5. Grounds of objection to the more common form of the monistic theory. 6. Professor Ladd's comment on monism as a metaphysical theory for the relation between body and mind.

VI.

1. Extent to which the objections against materialism apply to pantheism. 2. Grounds of the inability of pantheism to satisfy religious needs. 3. A discrimination as to different forms of pantheism.

VII.

1. The great efficiency of factors other than logic or formal argumentation in nurturing theistic faith. 2. The view to be taken on the question whether proper demonstration of the divine existence is possible. 3. Reasons for assigning real value to well-ordered proofs of the divine existence.

VIII.

1. The point of view from which the cosmological argument proceeds. 2. Possible objections to the argument and answers thereto. 3. Reasons for making the unitary power demanded by the argument the source of the being of the world-factors and not merely of their relations. 4. The degree to which this argument fulfills the requirement of a proof of the theistic conception.

IX.

1. The characteristics which the design argument, if valid, would require us to impute to the Being who is back of nature. 2. Facts in nature which are adapted to give an impression of a designing Intelligence. 3. Various expedients which are adopted to evade the need of postulating design, and the answers which may be rendered. 4. The bearing of such a theory as that of "natural selection" upon the argument from design. 5. Answer to the allegation that evidences of design are signs of the limitation of the Creator.

X.

1. The several points contained in the argument from human nature. 2. Reply to the charge that this argument savors of anthropomorphism.

XI.

1. The alleged deficiency of the foregoing arguments. 2. Considerations which practically annul the significance of the asserted deficiency.

XII.

1. Statement and criticism of the ontological argument. 2. Estimate of the Cartesian argument based on the supposition that an Infinite Author is needed to account for the idea of God. 3. The objections which may be urged against the theory that God is known by direct intuition properly so called. 4. Conclusion as to the grounds which legitimate theistic faith.

CHAPTER III.

I.

1. Considerations which approve faith in the possibility of special revelations. 2. Reply to the objection that the doctrine of special revelations is disparaging to the wisdom of God. 3. The different forms which special revelation may take.

II.

1. Conditions which may rationally be supposed to be imposed upon the method of revelation by the nature of cognition and the demands of mental integrity. 2. The conditions which similarly are imposed by the moral limitations of even superior men. 3. The lesson on the probable method of revelation supplied by reference to the way in which the interpretation of the natural world has proceeded. 4. The proper induction from the given list of considerations.

III.

1. Illustrations from the apostolic history of how the method of revelation has corresponded to the rational presuppositions. 2. Il-

lustration from the history of Israel, and from the content of the Psalms. 3. Relative prominence of the historical process as a medium of revelation.

IV.

1. Relation of the full use of the historical process to the preëminence of the Bible in respect of variety and balance of factors, and the proper rating of this preëminence. 2. Illustration of the preëminence of the Bible, in the given respect, from the types of literature found in the Old Testament. 3. Illustration from the framework of Old Testament theology. 4. Illustration from the relation between the two Testaments. 5. Illustration from the different classes of writing and types of doctrinal conception in the New Testament.

V.

1. The place among the credentials of the Bible which belongs to the unique personality of Christ, taken together with the extraordinary antecedents and consequents of its manifestation in the world. 2. Statement of the characteristics exemplified in Christ which make Him the marvel of history. 3. Relation of His human perfection to warrantable confidence in the sobriety of His self-consciousness even in its loftier expressions. 4. Ground for faith in the substantial truthfulness of the gospel picture of Christ. 5. The proper rating of the prophetical forecast of Christ's person and work. 6. Considerations which may be urged in behalf of conceding considerable latitude to a typical sense in prophecy. 7. The great motives which directed the minds of the prophets to a Messianic outlook, and the forms under which their hope and expectation were given expression. 8. Elements in the remarkable picture which supplements the manifestation of the unique personality of Christ.

VI.

1. The style in which prophecy generally portrays the issues of the future. 2. Instances of definite prediction of specific events. 3. Inference as to the warrant for finding in the facts of prophetical foresight a token of a divine factor in the biblical revelation.

VII.

1. Reasons for rating miracles among possible events. 2. Sense in which the term is used in the discussion. 3. The kind of agency presupposed in the working of miracles, and the compatibility of the use of such agency with a due conservation of the system of nature. 4. Conditions or tests of the genuineness and evidential value of reputed miracles, and the need of taking these tests together. 5. Application of the tests to the gospel miracles, with answers to the various forms of challenge brought against the reliability of the testimony in their behalf. 6. The extent to which the given tests apply to the Old Testament miracles. 7. Reply to the objection based on the facile multiplication of the stories of miracles in the annals of the saints. 8. Evidences for the miracle of Christ's resurrection. (See pp. 581-590.)

VIII.

1. The argument for the Bible which is furnished by the facts of Christian consciousness or inward experience. 2. The question whether this argument can be made to vouch for the entire Bible. 3. Answer to a possible objection to the force of the argument.

IX.

1. Respects in which a comparative view of "sacred books" goes to establish the superiority of the Christian Scriptures. 2. Reply to the contention that the argument thus constructed falls short of accrediting the Bible as containing the ultimate religion.

X.

1. The test of canonicity which must be rated as foremost, in consideration of the location of the principal evidence for the biblical revelation. 2. Secondary tests of canonicity. 3. Facts pertinent to the question whether it is possible to secure a perfectly definite standard of canonicity. 4. The books of the Old Testament which are most exposed to doubt, and the grounds on which they have been challenged. 5. The objections which hold against the Old Testament Apocrypha. 6. The extent to which the canonicity of New Testament books has been, or is now, matter of serious discussion.

XI.

1. The bearing of the problem of the authorship of the Pentateuch upon biblical authority. 2. The bearing of such questions as the unity of the Book of Isaiah and the date of the Book of Daniel upon biblical authority. 3. Extent to which Christian dogmatics is under stress to decide such questions. 4. Considerations which give importance to the question of the authorship of the Fourth Gospel, explanation of the contrast between this Gospel and the Synoptical Gospels, and the evidences external and internal which may be cited in favor of assigning it to the Apostle John. 5. Critical views respecting the authorship of epistles bearing the name of Paul.

XII.

1. Definition of inspiration, and conclusion as to the proper place for discussing the theme in dealing with the Bible. 2. The testimony in the Bible to the fact of inspiration, and the question how far this testimony avails for the construction of a dogmatic theory. 3. Reasons (rational and historical) for believing that inspiration, as operative in the biblical writers, was dynamical rather than mechanical. 4. The expectation which, from this point of view, could justly be entertained as respects the presence of errors in the Bible. 5. The evidence furnished by the biblical books on the question of errancy, and the bearing of antiquarian research on the same question. 6. Considerations which serve to show that the presence of errors in the Bible is not necessarily a stumbling-block to intelligent faith, or an occasion of nullifying the function of the Bible as a standard. 7. Views to be held respecting the operation of inspiration in different degrees; respecting its influence upon language; respecting the warrant to connect it specially with the act of writing; and respecting its kinship with the enlightening office of the Holy Spirit in believers generally. 8. The approved theory of inspiration as contrasted with competing theories, and the terms in which it may be expressed.

XIII.

1. Definition of the Christian consciousness, and specification of the respects in which alone it is competent to supplement the

biblical revelation. 2. The question of the competency of church authority to supplement that revelation, or to go beyond the demands of the Christian consciousness in imposing beliefs. 3. Reasons for concluding that tradition, as defined in Roman Catholic dogmatics, can not be appealed to as a trustworthy extra-biblical authority, and in fact is not practically depended upon in the Roman Church. 4. The capital fault by which Newman's theory of doctrinal development is vitiated.

Part II.

CHAPTER I.

I.

1. The logical demand of the preceding positions as respects admitting a veritable knowledge of God. 2. Reaction against excessive claims relative to the knowledge of God, and the resulting agnostic doctrine as expressed by Dean Mansel. 3. Points in the agnostic teaching of Herbert Spencer. 4. The bearing of such teaching on the interests of religion. 5. The fundamental error underlying this teaching. 6. Ways in which fathers and scholastics affiliated with agnosticism, and grounds for modifying their representations. 7. The qualified agnosticism of Ritschl. 8. The scriptural data on the subject of knowing God, and the conclusion to be drawn.

II.

1. Classification of the divine attributes. 2. Definition of unity and spirituality, with specification of the theosophic modification of the latter. 3. The proper interpretation of immutability and of omnipresence. 4. The twofold meaning of the eternity of God, and the question of His recognition of a temporal order. 5. A point of common agreement as respects the compass of the divine knowledge. 6. The Arminian theory on the divine foreknowledge of the free or contingent. 7. Questionable character of the supplement which is sometimes made to this theory in the

doctrine of the *scientia media*. 8. The Calvinian theory of foreknowledge taken in comparison with the Arminian. 9. Estimate of the advantages which the doctrine of nescience is supposed to have over the Arminian theory, and statement of the objections which may be brought against it. 10. The truth expressed in the doctrine of the divine omnipotence, and the forms of teaching by which it is compromised.

III.

1. Obvious grounds for ascribing an ethical nature to God, and the import of the term. 2. The compendious expression for the ethical nature of God. 3. Discrimination of the meanings pertaining to the terms holiness, righteousness, and justice. 4. Question as to the extent of the demands of divine justice, and specification of its relation to punishment. 5. Proper conception of the relation between love and justice. 6. Different aspects of divine love, its ruling conception, the appropriateness of its expenditure upon sinners, and the occasion for a revelation of it over and above that contained in nature. 7. Comparison of the two Testaments as to their ways of setting forth love and judgment respectively.

IV.

1. Reasons for affirming indefectibility of God's moral nature. 2. The proper conception of the relation of will (in its activity) to the ethical nature of God. 3. Union of necessity and freedom in God. 4. Relation of the will of God to truth and right.

CHAPTER II.

I.

1. The side from which it is best to approach the discussion of the doctrine of the Trinity. 2. The reason for including the period beyond the New Testament in the historical review. 3. The historical evidence for the divinity of Christ as contained in the teaching of the fourth century. 4. The historical evidence furnished by the third century. 5. The historical evidence furnished by the second century. 6. The grouping of the New Testament books for

the purpose of taking their evidence in the reverse order. 7. Caution against an unwarrantable inference from the application to Christ of terms belonging to the human scale. 8. The evidence for Christ's divinity contained in the Gospel and the Epistles of John. 9. The evidence contained in the Book of Revelation and in the Epistle to the Hebrews. 10. The evidence contained in the Synoptical Gospels and the Book of Acts. 11. The evidence contained in the later Pauline Epistles. 12. The evidence contained in the earlier Pauline Epistles. 13. General conclusion respecting the New Testament evidence for the divinity of Christ. 14. Statements in the Old Testament which may be regarded as bearing on this theme.

II.

1. Evidence from the patristic writings as to faith in the personality and divinity of the Holy Spirit. 2. The scriptural evidence for the personality and divinity of the Spirit.

III.

1. The maximum warrant for the trinitarian theory. 2. Reasons for rejecting the Arian and Sabellian theories, as also for ruling out any form of simple modalism. 3. Question as to whether the term "Son" is expressive of a pre-temporal and necessary relation. 4. Question as to whether the Scriptures afford an explicit ground for the metaphysical conception of the procession of the Spirit. 5. Question as to whether it is appropriate to admit a certain subordination of the Son and the Spirit to the Father.

IV.

1. The compatibility of the trinitarian doctrine with reason, and the advantages which it can claim in construing the thought of a self-sufficient Being. 2. Inquiry as to the extent of the rational grounds which make for a trinality, and not simply a duality, of Divine Persons. 3. The proper expectation relative to illustrating the trinitarian truth, and the illustration of greatest historical note. 4. Speculation as to dependence of the divine self-consciousness on the trinitarian process. 5. The form of the Hegelian doctrine of

the Trinity. 6. The limiting notions which belong to the term "Person" in the trinitarian discussion. 7. Formula for giving intelligible expression to the doctrine of the Trinity.

CHAPTER III.

I.

1. The interest dominating the biblical references to the theme of creation. 2. The different attempts which have been made to conserve a scientific character to the creation narrative in Genesis, and the difficulties which they have severally encountered. 3. The most eligible conclusion respecting the character of the narrative. 4. The question whether biblical data favor the *ex nihilo* doctrine of creation (or the doctrine that the Creator made use of no pre-existing stuff). 5. Superiority of the biblical standpoint to that of pagan teaching. 6. The motive of creation.

II.

1. Limitation of the province of natural science on the theme of creation. 2. Bearing of the scientific doctrine of evolution on the theistic conception, and also on the subject of man's dignity and destiny. 3. Testimonies of scientists on the latter point. 4. The principal considerations which may be urged for the fact of the evolution of organic nature. 5. The chief factors in evolution as recognized by naturalists. 6. Considerations which may be urged on the side of objection to the evolution theory, and the conclusion which they seem to legitimate.

III.

1. Reasons on the score of which philosophy may justly incline to the conclusion that the world was created *ex nihilo*. 2. The theory taught by scholastic realism of the more pronounced type relative to an eternal substratum of things, and the grounds for its rejection. 3. The relation of creation to time.

IV.

1. Purpose of the biblical references to the theme of conservation. 2. The reason for distinguishing between creation and conservation.

3. The question whether any real interest is sacrificed in construing impersonal nature as simply the product of a constant divine energizing.

V.

1. The inference which the notion of divine conservation enforces as to the extent of Divine Providence. 2. Objections to the doctrine of an all-inclusive providence. 3. The best considerations which may be urged in reply to the objections. 4. Reasons for concluding that God may exercise His providence in special ways, and that the scheme of law does not prevent answers to prayer.

Part III.

CHAPTER I.

I.

1. The feature in which the point of view of the Bible relative to the rational creation bears resemblance to its manner of contemplating physical nature. 2. Suggestion as to the extent of the rational creation beyond the sphere of men.

II.

1. Occasion to presume on the presence of popular or pictorial elements in the biblical angelology. 2. Periods or stages which may be distinguished in biblical angelology.

III.

Enumeration of matters more or less clearly revealed respecting angels.

IV.

1. The extent of the data for determining the time of the creation of angels. 2. The most that can be said on the question whether angels have bodies. 3. The reasonable conclusion as to the relation of angels to time and space.

V.

1. The credibility of the fact of the existence of evil angels. 2. Instances, real or supposed, of references to Satan and evil angels in the Old Testament. 3. Progress in the biblical conception of Satan. 4. The way in which the references to the chieftainship of Satan may be understood. 5. Judgment on views which deny the personality of Satan. 6. The objections urged against the reality of demoniacal possession, and the grounds which may be alleged against their conclusiveness. 7. Biblical facts which lend support to the supposition that on the theme of demoniacal possession Christ practiced a very considerable measure of accommodation. 8. The destiny contemplated in the Bible for Satan and his angels.

VI.

1. The reason for the divine toleration of the agency of evil angels. 2. The suitable attitude of the religious man toward the subject of the evil kingdom.

CHAPTER II.

I.

1. The extent to which the Bible attempts to give an anthropology. 2. The Old Testament method of designating the higher nature in man. 3. The New Testament method of designating this nature, and the question whether it gives any ground for preferring trichotomy to dichotomy. 4. The choice between trichotomy and dichotomy which is favored by rational grounds. 5. The estimate which the Bible in general places upon man's body, and the question whether Paul's characterization of the "flesh" stands in contrast with that estimate.

II.

1. The scriptural assumption as to the ground of bodily death. 2. Suggestion as to a possible method, in connection with a sinless race, of securing immunity from death in spite of natural mortality.

III.

1. The rational considerations which may be urged in behalf of the immortality of the soul, and the degree of their conclusiveness. 2. The tenor of the biblical teachings on this subject, and the explanation of the contrast between the Old Testament representations and those of the New Testament.

IV.

1. Reasons for not accepting the notion of preëxistence when dealing with the question of the origin of souls. 2. Scriptural and rational evidences for creationism and traducianism respectively, and the grounds which may be urged in behalf of a preference for the former. 3. Estimate of the theory which combines the two. 4. Data bearing on the question of the unity of the race. 5. Data relative to the antiquity of the race.

V.

1. The elements which conscience, taken in the broader sense, includes. 2. Reasons for concluding that each of these elements is based in man's inherent moral constitution. 3. The sense in which conscience can be called the voice of God. 4. Substance of Paul's teaching on the subject of conscience.

VI.

1. The verdict which is naturally drawn from the facts of conscience respecting the freedom of man. 2. The main proofs that freedom, in the sense of a power of *contrary choice*, belongs to man. 3. The principal objections urged by the determinist against freedom, and refutation of these objections (including that expressed in the Edwardean puzzle). 4. Statement of the way in which the determinist, or necessitarian, attempts to secure responsibility, and exposure of its faultiness. 5. The distinction between *formal freedom* and *real freedom*, and the relation in which they must stand to one another in a truly free and responsible creaturely agent.

6. The question whether there is clear philosophical warrant for the possible attainment by a creature of absolute fixity of character. 7. The proper view on the relation of freedom to power or ability.

VII.

1. Legitimacy of the notion of an original righteousness. 2. Point of difference between the scholastics and the Reformers in construing this notion. 3. The lack of scriptural warrant for the very emphatic views respecting the nature or content of original righteousness which have sometimes been entertained.

VIII.

1. Extent to which an explanation of apostasy can rationally be expected. 2. Estimate of the Leibnitzian theory on this subject. 3. Estimate of the theory which finds the explanation of sin in man's sensuous nature. 4. Estimate of the theory which imputes sin to one or another form of divine purpose. 5. The question whether sin is adequately described as negation or privation. 6. The question whether sin in all its forms can be brought under the category of selfishness.

IX.

1. The amount of reference in the Bible to the Adamic connections of human sinfulness. 2. Grounds for concluding that Old Testament thought did not assume that the sin of Adam brought condemnation, as a birth condition, upon his posterity. 3. Grounds for concluding that New Testament (or Pauline) thinking did not assume the given result of Adam's sin. 4. The serious rational objections which stand against every form of the doctrine that the race incurred guilt or condemnation on the simple ground of Adam's sin. 5. Specific objections to the realistic theory. 6. Objections to the theory of immediate imputation. 7. Objections to the theory of mediate imputation, as also to a misty form of imputation. 8. The only sense in which original sin can be affirmed of the posterity of Adam. 9. The proper measure of hereditary corruption. 10. The proper measure of personal sinfulness.

Part IV.

CHAPTER I.

I.

1. Scriptural evidences in favor of the conclusion that in the incarnation the Son of God assumed human nature in the full sense. 2. The force of rational considerations and of doctrinal consensus on the side of the same conclusion.

II.

1. Explanation of the limited extent to which the fact of the supernatural conception of Christ comes to view in the New Testament. 2. Reasons for believing that the fact as reported in the Gospel narratives was based in apostolic tradition. 3. The appropriate rating of the dogmatic import of the supernatural conception. 4. The standpoint of the New Testament respecting the sinlessness of Christ. 5. Judgment on attempts to discredit the fact of Christ's sinless humanity. 6. The chief grounds of faith in the truth of Christ's sinlessness. 7. The religious worth of this truth. 8. The question whether temptation is to be regarded as compatible with the sinlessness of Christ's manhood, and with the fact of its unique connection with the divine. 9. The theoretical position which it seems necessary to take respecting the liability of Christ, in the period of trial, to yield to temptation.

III.

1. Statement (in brief terms) of the Christological problem. 2. Considerations which may serve to modify the demand for instant solution.

IV.

1. The general Christological standard promulgated by the Council of Chalcedon, and the sphere for further construction which it has been supposed to have left open. 2. The historical circumstances under which the doctrine of the *communicatio idiomatum* arose, and the import of the doctrine. 3. Reasons for rejecting the doctrine. 4. Statement of the radical doctrine of the

kenosis in the three principal forms under which it has appeared. 5. Objections which hold against the kenotic theories in common. 6. Specific objections to the theories severally. 7. Rating of the scriptural basis for a doctrine of the kenosis.

V.

1. The helpful considerations to which an appeal can be made in an attempt to construe the union of the human and the divine in Christ. 2. The type of consciousness from which Christ seems to have spoken, and the question whether, in view of all the data, we can see how His consciousness was strictly conformable to the ideal which is set forth as the goal of Christological construction. 3. Grounds for awarding considerable scope to the human factor in Christ as conditioning the expression of the divine in Him, and giving occasion to stages in that expression. 4. Illustration from kindred topics of the fact that we ought not to be surprised at our inability completely to solve the Christological problem. 5. Summary of the main results of the discussion. 6. Terms which may prudently be used in a formal Christological definition.

VI.

1. Explanation of the exclusive connection with the work of redemption which the Bible gives to the incarnation. 2. Considerations which bespeak tolerance for the theory that in the divine plan the incarnation did not hinge altogether upon man's apostasy.

CHAPTER II.

I.

1. The three offices of Christ, and the sense in which they are distinguishable. 2. The degree to which the kingly office was manifested in Christ's earthly career. 3. Distinctive features in Christ's prophetical ministry, and the question as to the spheres or regions in which it was fulfilled. 4. The point of emphasis in Christ's priestly office, and the period covered by that office. 5. The importance, for the Church, of a proportionate stress upon the three offices.

II.

1. The main ground on which we are to proceed in determining the Old Testament doctrine of atonement. 2. Ritschl's view respecting the import of the Old Testament sacrificial system, and the reasons for rejecting that view. 3. The part of the sacrificial transaction which principally expressed the idea of atonement, and the reason given in the Old Testament for locating atoning virtue therein. 4. Extent to which the cost to the offerer entered into the estimate of the value of the sacrifice; extent to which the gracious appointment of God entered into that estimate. 5. Summary of the more essential points in the significance of the sacrificial ritual. 6. Question whether this significance can be regarded as seriously abridged by references to other grounds of divine favor, or in consideration of critical theories as to the development of the sacrificial system. 7. Conclusion as to the appropriate way of construing the sacrificial language of the New Testament.

III.

1. List of propositions relative to the work of atonement which are clearly warranted by scriptural texts. 2. Some obvious conclusions which spring from a survey of the texts. 3. The preferable interpretation of the anguished exclamation of Christ upon the cross. 4. The respect in which we may reasonably suppose the suffering of Christ to have worth to God. 5. Grounds for attributing an objective or Godward bearing to Christ's work.

IV.

1. The main points of view in the Socinian theory, and the defects to be alleged against the theory. 2. Points in Schleiermacher's theory which invite approval and blame respectively. 3. Statement and criticism of Bushnell's original theory; also of his revised theory. 4. Ritschl's theory as compared with the two preceding.

V.

1. Statement and criticism of the Swedenborgian theory. 2. Statement and criticism of the mystical theory. 3. Statement

of the judicial theory and of the list of objections to which it is exposed.

VI.

1. Importance of transcending the standpoint of temporal succession in an attempt to construe God's attitude to the work of redemption. 2. Views respecting the demands for the maintenance of a perfect balance or harmony of God's moral perfections, and respecting the work of Christ as responding to those demands (and thereby supplying the objective element in atonement). 3. Scriptural and rational justification of the assignment of a non-temporal character to the atonement as related to divine thought and feeling. 4. The theory approved in the text as compared with various theories passed under inspection—the moral influence, the mystical, the judicial, and the pure governmental. 5. Reason for discarding the Anselmic notion of a real transfer of merits. 6. The propriety of giving an objective or Godward bearing to that of which God Himself is the chief source. 7. Correspondence between the advocated method of atonement and God's customary method of dealing with men. 8. Summary of the principal points in the approved theory.

VII.

1. Objections which might possibly be urged against such an idea of atonement as is contained in the text, and responses thereto. 2. A significant admission of Bushnell relative to the practically fruitful way of regarding the atonement.

Part V.

CHAPTER I.

I.

1. Position taken on the universality of the opportunity to appropriate the salvation provided in Christ. 2. The sense in which the Scriptures admit and enforce the idea of election or predestination, and the contrast between this sense and that contained in

the Augustinian or Calvinistic dogma. 3. Reasons for concluding that Paul does not teach (either in Romans or elsewhere) predestination in the ultra or Calvinian sense. 4. The preferable interpretation of the Johannine sentences which have sometimes been cited in the interest of an ultra predestinarianism. 5. Considerations which are properly urged against using Mark iv, 11, 12, or Acts xiii, 48, in support of unconditional election. 6. The positive evidences afforded by Paul and John on the side of the universality of the opportunity for salvation. 7. The futility of the attempt to reconcile the cordial universality of the gospel call with fixed limitation of real opportunity for salvation. 8. The historical conditions under which the radical doctrine of predestination gained currency, and the comment afforded thereby on the merits of the doctrine. 9. The rational objections to the doctrine in question. 10. Inappropriateness of an appeal in its behalf to the analogy of nature.

II.

1. List of the human conditions of salvation which are mentioned in the Scriptures, and the inquiry whether it is necessary to rate them all as distinct conditions. 2. Reasons for making faith the principal condition, and for annexing repentance and evangelical obedience as secondary conditions. 3. The sense in which faith may be spoken of as the *sole* condition. 4. The meaning of religious faith; its proper object; its specifically Christian sense as compared with a general theistic sense; and the question whether faith in the former sense is requisite for salvation. 5. The compatibility of the description of faith, given in the text, with the definition in the Epistle to the Hebrews (xi, 1). 6. The proper conception of the relation between faith and knowledge.

III.

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and his conception of the way in which it fulfills the justifying office. 5. The true putting of Paul's doctrine of imputation. 6. The Roman Catholic theory of justification, and the criticism which may be passed upon it from the standpoint of Paul's teaching. 7. Consideration of the view which makes justification a corporate matter rather than an individual one. 8. The sense in which the resurrection of Christ may be assigned a place in the basis of justification. 9. The point in which the Epistle of James seems to fall short of Paul's teaching. 10. Instructions of Christ in which the substance of the Pauline doctrine of justification may be detected. 11. The philosophical character of the Pauline doctrine, and the office which belongs to it in safeguarding the interests of spiritual religion. 12. Adoption as related to justification. 13. The sense which pertains to adoption in the light of the universal Fatherhood of God. 14. The practical value of the doctrine of sonship toward God in relation to the cause of human brotherhood.

IV.

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V.

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VI.

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VII.

1. Connection between the regenerate character and the filial standing. 2. Statement and estimate of the evidences which bear on the possibility of a complete loss of the regenerate character.

CHAPTER II.

I.

1. The reason for placing the topic of the Church after that of the personal appropriation of salvation. 2. The New Testament employment of the terms "Church" and "Kingdom." 3. The amount of attention given in the New Testament to the religious needs and duties of the individual as compared with that bestowed on church institutions. 4. Considerations which serve to emphasize the importance of the Church. 5. Terms applicable to the Church in its ideal character, and the ground for distinguishing between the visible and the invisible Church. 6. The point of superior emphasis on the theme of church unity. 7. Grounds for

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II.

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III.

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IV.

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V.

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VI.

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VII.

1. Specifications which enter into a full statement of the significance of the Lord's Supper. 2. The rise of the doctrine of transubstantiation, and the content of the doctrine as authoritatively fixed by the Council of Trent. 3. Considerations which demonstrate the gratuitous and irrational character of the vast assumption expressed in the doctrine. 4. Objections which stand against any form of the doctrine of a real bodily presence in the eucharist. 5. Objections to the Roman Catholic theory of the eucharistic sacrifice. 6. The question whether baptism should be rated as a necessary antecedent to participation in the Lord's Supper.

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CHAPTER III.

I.

1. The propriety of including under the topic of eschatology the fortunes in store for the Church as well as those awaiting the individual. 2. The peculiarity of the New Testament forecast as compared with the character of the outlook in the Old Testament. 3. The important eschatological element naturally resident in Christian faith. 4. Foreshadowings of the fortunes of the Church in this world on the side of progress and victory. 5. Interpretation of the reference to the millennial reign, and statement of the view relative to a visible reign of Christ upon earth which the New Testament representation as a whole enforces. 6. Representations respecting trial and conflict as awaiting the Church, and views as to the identity of the hostile powers which are depicted. 7. Extent to which time measures were regarded in the New Testament forecasts, and the probable explanation of the forms of statement which might be taken as implying that Christ predicted the speedy close of the dispensation.

II.

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V.

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